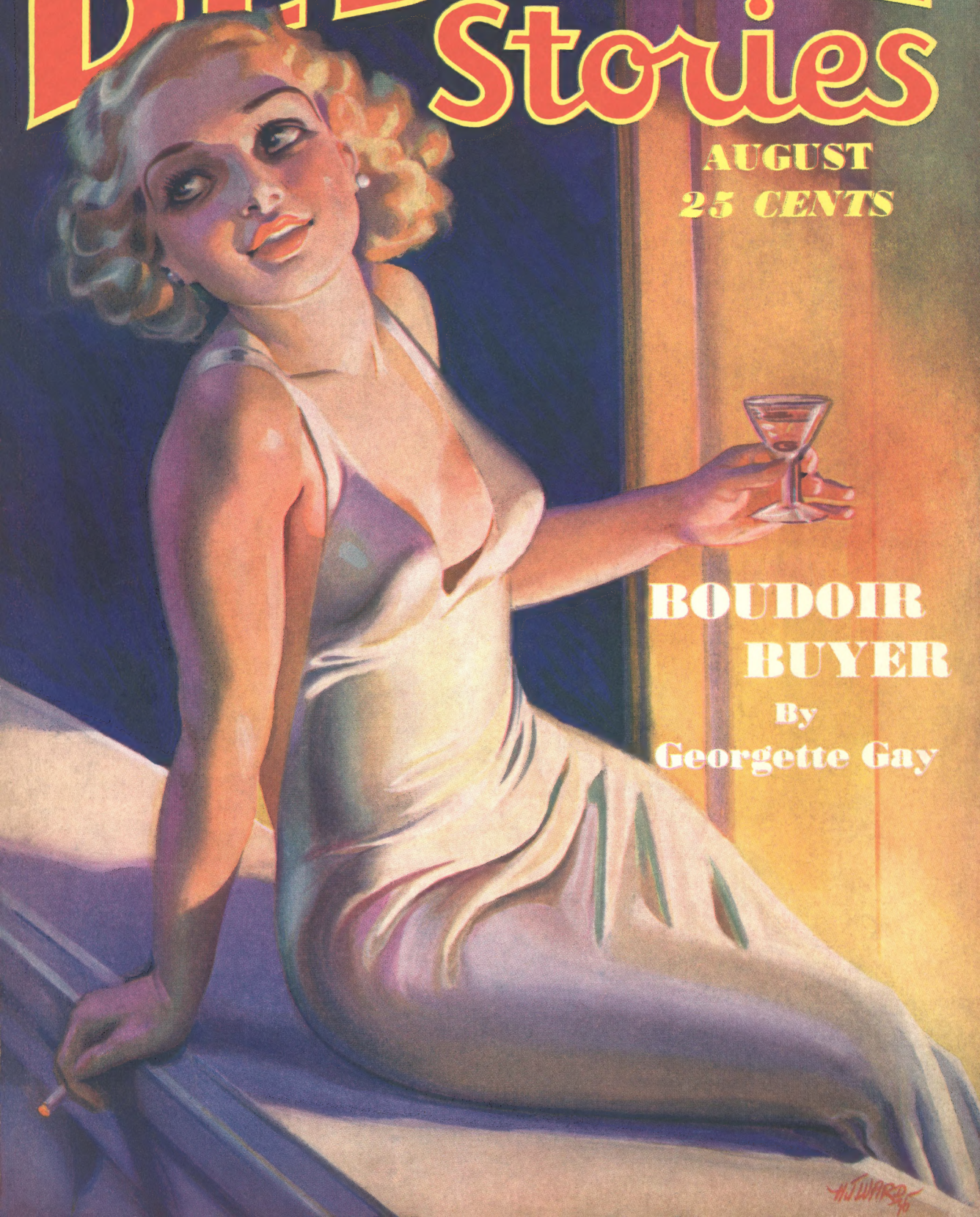


BEDTIME Stories

AUGUST
25 CENTS

BOUDOIR
BUYER

By
Georgette Gay



H. J. WARD

THAT WAS GREAT, DEAR!
LET'S MAKE THE NEXT
NUMBER "THE WEDDING
MARCH"

HOW A QUICK, EASY WAY TO LEARN MUSIC



changed my name from "Miss" to "Mrs."

LESS than a year ago I was friendless, lonely, unhappy. Then came the amazing event that changed my whole life.

Here's how it happened!

One evening I was sitting in my lonely room gazing from the window. From across the street came the sound of jazz and happy laughter. I could see couples dancing—others talking—all having a good time.

Everything seemed to center around the girl at the piano—Mary Nelson. How I envied her! She had friends, popularity, happiness—all the things I longed for—but *didn't have*.

The next afternoon I dropped over to see Mary—told her how lonely and depressed I felt. To cheer me up Mary sat down at the piano and played waltzes, jazz bits, sonatas. When she had finished, I sighed enviously.

"Thanks, Mary, it was wonderful. What wouldn't I give to play like that! But it's too late now! I should have had a

teacher when I was in school—like you!"

Mary smiled and said: "Ann, I never had a teacher in my life. In fact, not so long ago I couldn't play a note."

"Impossible," I exclaimed. "How did you do it?"

Then she told me about a wonderful new short-cut method of learning music that had been perfected by the U. S. School of Music. You learn real music from the start. When I left Mary it was with new hope. If she could learn to play this way, so could I. That very night I wrote for the Free Book and Demonstration Lesson.

I never dreamed that learning to play the piano could be so simple—even easier than Mary had pictured it. And as the lessons continued, they seemed to get easier. Although I never had any "talent" I was playing my favorites—almost before I knew it.

Then came the big night at Margaret Jones' party. What a moment that was when our hostess, apparently troubled, exclaimed: "Isn't it a shame that Mary Nelson can't be here to play the piano."

I spoke up, "I'll try to fill Mary's place—if you're not too critical."

Everyone seemed surprised. "Why, I didn't know she played!" someone behind whispered.

As I struck the first rippling chords of Nevin's lovely "Narcissus," a hush fell over the room. I could hardly believe it, but—I was holding the party spell-bound.

When I finished you should have heard them applaud! Everyone insisted I play more! Only too glad, I played piece after piece. Before the evening was over, I had been invited to three more parties. And it wasn't long until I met Tom who shortly afterward asked me to become his wife.

FREE BOOKLET AND DEMONSTRATION LESSON

This story is typical. You, too, can learn to play your favorite instrument by this remarkable easy "at home" method.

Send for the free book and free Demonstration Lesson, explaining all about this remarkable method. You'll see how simple this expert home instruction really is . . . how easily you can become an accomplished musician as many thousands of others have. So if you really want to learn to play . . . to win new friends . . . take this opportunity to make your dreams come true. Sign the coupon and send it . . . **now**. There's no obligation on your part whatever. U. S. School of Music, Dept. 4586, Brunswick Bldg., New York City. Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit.

Thirty-eighth year [Established 1898]

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Please send me your free book, "How You Can Master Music in Your Own Home," with inspiring message by Dr. Frank Crane. Free Demonstration Lesson and particulars of your easy payment plan. I am interested in the following course:

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Piano	Violin
Organ	Clarinet
Ukulele	Flute
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Piccolo	Mandolin
Guitar	'Cello
Hawaiian Steel Guitar	
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Piano Accordion	
Italian and German	
Accordion	
Voice and Speech Culture	
Harmony and Composition	
Drums and Traps	
Banjo (Plectrum, 5-String	
or Tenor)	



AUGUST, 1936

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BEDTIME STORIES, a monthly magazine, is published by the
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Let's Write!



NOTICE:—No letter will be published unless the writer gives permission to print his or her full name and address.—*The Editor.*

Dear Editor:

Please publish my letter in your "Let's Write".

I am 20 years of age, have reddish brown hair and blue eyes.

I will answer all letters received and will exchange snap shots.

Come on readers, give a lonesome girl a break.

Sincerely,

Ruby Ross

706 W. Peace St., Raleigh, N. C.

* * *

Dear Editor:

I have been an ardent reader of your magazine "Bedtime Stories" for many months, and always have received a great amount of pleasure from all stories contained between the two covers.

I have been going to write and ask you to reprint my letter for some time, but today is the first time I have had any time to do so.

I am about six feet tall; weight is about 180 lbs., and have dark hair, brown eyes, and am considered good looking. I am a graduate of Ohio State University, Class of 1934, majored in Radio Engineering but as yet am not employed in my profession but instead am editing the Dayton Labor Newspaper.

I wish very much to find a pal among the readers of your wonderful publication and will answer all letters and exchange snapshots if writer desires me to.

Thank you,

Charles H. Prentice

405 Willowood Dr., Dayton, Ohio

Dear Editor:

Wanted: Assistance from readers to cure loneliness through correspondence.

By: A tall young man of 23 who has seen and done a lot of things and would like to hear about others.

Promised: Prompt replies to all letters—photographs in exchange for photos.

Through the courtesy of: The editors of "Bedtime Stories", a smart magazine for snappy people.

Sincerely,

William B. Drake

General Delivery, Philadelphia, Pa.

* * *

Dear Editor:

"Bedtime Stories" is some magazine and I want to congratulate you. Will you please enroll me as a member of your "Let's Write Club". My hobbies are shows, good music and stamp collecting. I would like to trade stamps with any of your readers.

Sincerely,

Carl Williams

28 North Judson St., Gloversville, N. Y.

* * *

Dear Editor:

I should like to join your "Let's Write" Club.

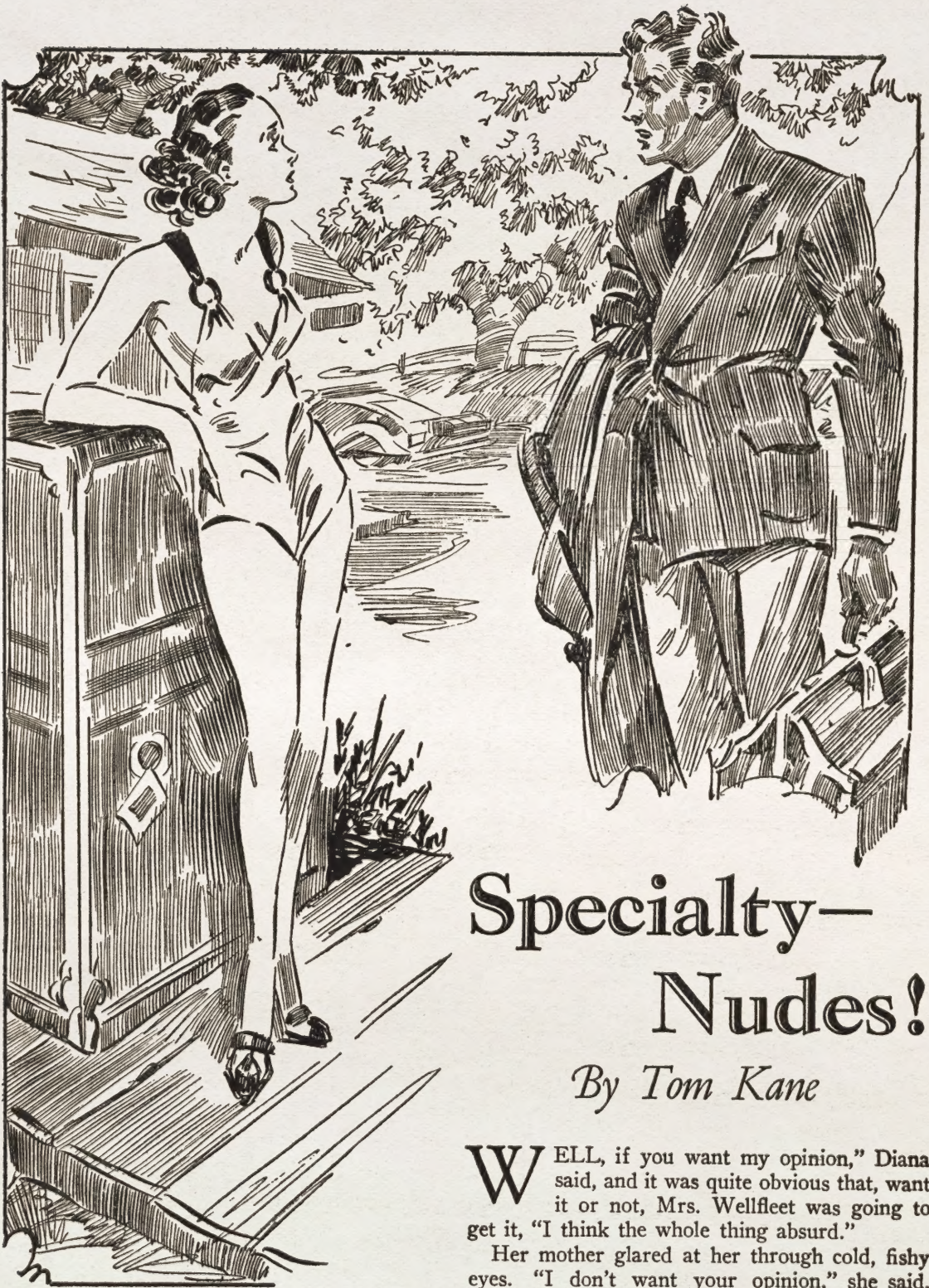
I am 34 years old and have been places. I would like to swap notes with congenial readers.

Sincerely,

L. Rose

C.C.Co., 258, Reno, Nevada





"You wouldn't like me to carry your bag, would you?" Diana's voice was sarcastic.

Specialty— Nudes!

By Tom Kane

WELL, if you want my opinion," Diana said, and it was quite obvious that, want it or not, Mrs. Wellfleet was going to get it, "I think the whole thing absurd."

Her mother glared at her through cold, fishy eyes. "I don't want your opinion," she said. There was a finality to her voice which would have daunted anyone less self-assured than Diana.

"Who is this man John Williams?" Diana wanted to know.

Mrs. Wellfleet fanned herself against the summer heat with aristocratic languor, and gazed at the bathing suited figure of her daughter with undisguised distaste. "If," she said, and the word dropped to the flagstones of the terrace like an ice cube, "you spent a little less time in the night clubs of New York and a little more time in the very excellent museums, it wouldn't be necessary for you to ask such a question. John Williams happens to be one of the greatest portrait painters of this generation."

"Oh," and there was disappointment in Diana's tone. "I thought at first he might be a band leader."

Mrs. Wellfleet clucked and fanned herself a little more vigorously.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Diana, parading round in a bathing suit like that. Good gracious, child, I can see just about all there is to see. What must the servants think?"

Diana shook her head without a great deal of interest. She did, however, survey her sun tanned body. And there was no lack of interest.

She was wearing a skin tight, skimpy silk swimming suit which made her almost black hair seem blacker, since the bathing suit was milk white. Not only did it do this to her hair, but it made her brown body seem almost black. Her thighs were round and full, and they were there to be seen and admired. There was no back to the suit that could be called a back, and how she managed to keep her large and high breasts covered was a mystery. Her arms were folded behind her glistening head, and she was lolling negligently in a deck chair and her legs were crossed. She was so pretty that she was a little inclined to take one's breath away. Her voice was like thick honey, soft with the drawl of the expensive southern finishing school. Diana gave one the impression of studied laziness. But she had her moments.

"What I can't understand, Mother," she said, "is why you want to have your portrait painted. In most things, you're a very intelligent woman. Surely, you don't imagine that your face is going to enhance any wall?"

Mrs. Wellfleet was not in the least angry. "I never set up to be a raving beauty. There must be, however, something for you children to look at."

Diana smiled. "Why not have him paint me? In the nude?"

"Diana!" Her mother was genuinely shocked. "I never heard of such a thing."

"There's a first time for everything," Diana drawled. "I think it's quite an idea. Let the

little devils know what I looked like before they came along."

Mrs. Wellfleet got regally to her feet. "Diana," she said stiffly, "I don't know where you get these ideas, and I simply won't sit here and listen to such trash." She started towards the French windows leading into the cool of the house. As she was about to step through, she paused and again faced her daughter. "By the way," she said, "you'll have to meet Mr. Williams at the station. Johnson's gone into town with the Cadillac."

"All right," Diana yawned. "How will I know him?"

"Don't ask me. Look for a man who looks as if he's waiting to be met."

"Okay. What time?"

"Four-eighteen. See that he's shown to his room and made comfortable. Tell him cocktails on the terrace at seven-thirty."

"Uh-huh." Diana glanced out of the corner of her eye, and when she was certain her mother had gone in, she slipped down the top of the bathing suit and bared her form to the hot afternoon sunlight.

Thoughtfully, she ran her slender hands gently along her sleek sun tanned body. Diana sighed a little and commenced to doze. Her hands dropped from her bosom and trailed on the cool flagstones of the terrace.

She awakened with a start and glanced at her wristwatch. With a muttered ejaculation, she shrugged her breasts back into place in the bathing suit, settled them comfortably and got to her feet. Dressed as she was, without even a hat, she walked languidly in the direction of the garage.

SHE CAUSED QUITE a stir as she drove furiously down the main road in the direction of the small, seacoast town. The top of the roadster was down and the wind whipped at her loose and shining hair. It tossed it about her bare shoulders and caused it to stream out behind her. It smelled of perfume and salt water.

By the time she arrived at the sleepy little station, the train was pulling out and the solitary man on the platform was making his way towards the dilapidated taxi. Diana brought the smart little roadster to a halt with a screaming of brakes. She jumped out and went towards the wayfarer.

In the same languid drawl, she said, "I hope you're John Williams."

The man turned and stared at her. "I am," he said. "I'm due at Mrs. Wellfleet's house."

"I'm her daughter, Diana. I was sent to meet you, the man's doing something else."



*"You win," she said.
"Wait until I lock the
door . . ."*

"Oh." John Williams looked at her without interest. He indicated the car. "That yours?" he asked. Diana nodded. "Shall we push off then? I'm sticky and looking forward to a bath."

"You wouldn't like me to carry your bag, would you?" Diana's voice was the same, lazy drawl, but there were little sparks in her dark eyes.

"It wouldn't be too heavy for you? Thanks." Deliberately, John tossed her the bag and Diana managed to catch it. With him leading the way, they walked over to the car. The bag was heavy; but Diana would rather have died on the stake than admit it. She tossed it into the open rumble and slid down behind the wheel. John got in beside her and she slipped the little car in gear.

"You're a nervy young man," Diana said as the car gathered speed.

"No, I'm not. But I didn't want to come here in the first place, and I loathe being made a spectacle of."

Diana eyed him in surprise. "And were you?" she asked.

"That silly thing you're wearing may be all right in the bedroom; but it hardly fits in with

a railroad station in the middle of town. I don't like that sort of thing."

"I took a nap and didn't have time to change," Diana found herself saying.

John raised his hand. "Please don't apologize," he said.

"I was not apologizing!" snapped Diana, and for once the studied drawl was forgotten.

They drove on in silence, and Diana took the opportunity of looking her guest over. He was tall and broad shouldered, and he was lean about the middle. He had taken off his hat and the sunlight gleamed in his thick, straight hair. He was a little pale; but his profile would have done credit to a matinee idol. There were little lines about his eyes and she judged him to be in the low thirties. A very attractive young man, she thought.

"So you're a portrait painter," Diana said. She noticed that her bare leg was brushing lightly against his. Whether he noticed it or not she was not certain. He made no move and no indication that he felt anything. Diana frankly, felt a little thrill going through her, and she knew that it was not only the rush of air that was causing this emotion.

"I am not a portrait painter," John said. "I paint nude women."

Diana laughed. "You're not going to paint my mother in the nude, are you?" she drawled at him.

"No. She offered me such a staggering sum of money, I couldn't turn it down. It means I can go back to Europe and study some more."

"How about painting me in the nude?" Diana said.

"Not interested. Thanks very much."

Diana fought down her resentment. "You're the rudest boor I've ever met," she said slowly.

John turned to her, and for the first time, she saw him smile. "I know," he said. "That's because I'm scared. I don't really mean to hurt your feelings."

Diana ran the car into the side of the road. She glared at John with smoldering eyes. "Look here," she said, "usually I have to fight to keep men's hands off me. You don't seem interested. What's the matter with it?"

"It doesn't appeal to me."

Diana looked about her hurriedly. The road was deserted. Suddenly she flung her brown, bare arms about John's neck and dragged him to her. She held him close and she did the naughtiest things with her large, pointed curves against him. She pressed her bare legs tight against his and when she kissed him, he thought he'd walked into the maw of a blast furnace.

He felt the contact of her bare flesh against his hands. He dropped his long fingers to her naked legs and traced a scorching course along the soft, tanned flesh. He was breathing heavily, and his fingers were about to steal onto Diana's slightly covered breasts, when she suddenly broke away from him and restarted the car.

"I don't usually tease men," she said. "I either

want to and do, or I don't want to and don't. But you had it coming to you."

John said nothing.

JOHN WAS STANDING alone on the terrace after dinner that evening, when he was joined by Diana. She was dressed in a clinging white organdie evening gown and he could see the outline of her lovely body as though she were wearing nothing at all. Standing beside him, she said in her slow, lazy drawl,

"I heard you turn Mother down and I don't blame you. When're you returning to New York, Mr. Williams?"

"Tomorrow. I'm just not a portrait painter and that's about all there is to it. I shall have to stick to my nudes."

"I thought we might do something this evening. In the next town, there's a burlesque show playing, and the servants tell me it's just about the most risqué thing they've ever seen. It ought to interest you."

"It would," John answered quietly. "Will you come with me?"

Diana turned to him for a second or two without speaking. Then, in a low, tense voice, she said, "Yes, I will. Wait until I get into something a little more suitable." John nodded and she drifted off into the house. He smiled into the moonlight. She did not think he'd take her up on the offer. He lighted a cigarette and inhaled deeply.

He was aroused from his thoughts by the arrival of the butler.

"Miss Diana's compliments, sir," said the butler, "but she finds she has a headache. She says, would you mind going to the burlesque alone? Here is the key to her car."

John thought rapidly. Another shot in the dark. He took the key and nodded. "Thank Miss Diana for me," he said, "and tell her I shall try to enjoy myself without her, and that I hope she'll be much better in the morning." The butler bowed and withdrew. John smiled again. Grimly this time. He'd show this spoiled brat with the fake drawl where she headed in. He stepped down off the terrace and walked slowly towards the garages.

THE DIRTY LITTLE theatre was only half filled when John took his seat, and he wished he had not come. It was hot and stuffy, and the audience seemed to be composed solely of farm-hands and fisherboys. The atmosphere of the place seemed equally divided by the smell of stables and the smell of drying fish nets. John shuddered and sat slumped in his seat.

The lights dimmed and the band struck out.



*John wrapped his arms about her.
"I fell in love with you at first sight,"
she said.*

into the overture. Advertisements appeared on the screen. John was bored stiff. Then the curtain rose and the show was on.

A line of blowsy and tired looking chorus girls walked dismally through a routine. They did it three times, removing first this and then that at the end of each chorus. Finally they stood there in G strings which sent the local yokels into hysterics. John closed his eyes and reached for his hat. His fingers had closed on the brim when he heard the cracked voice of an announcer through the public address system.

"Ladeeze and gen'lemen . . . presenting Trixie Treadways!" John opened his eyes and one of the most beautiful girls he had ever seen walked out onto the stage. She was dressed in starched white organdie, which hung about her like a cloud. Hard looking? Sure. Her hair was a brazen gold, so obviously bleached and dyed that one took it for granted. Her eyes were heavy with mascara and

when she started to sing, even the most carried-away of the local youths squirmed a bit. John did not listen to her. He watched her. Her grace of movement was spell-binding.

It was not long in coming. Trixie presently reached the end of the song and she started fum-

bling with the fastenings on the dress. She unhooked it and stepped out of it. In panties and narrow brassiere, she walked about the stage. Her breasts bobbed up and down inside the brassiere, and John had never seen such a seductive, voluptuous twisting of wide and feminine hips. He was as thrilled as any of the others in the audience.

In due course, Trixie reached the end of the act. She took off the brassiere bringing her hands up to partially cover the lush hills and paraded about the stage in panties and slippers. There was a gasp of envy as her white flesh gleamed in the spotlight. Then she walked to the wings and turned her back on the audience. Everything was hushed save the gibbering of the out-of-pitch orchestra. Trixie eased the silk panties over her hips and down her thighs. She stepped out of them, leaving no more than a narrow silver ribbon, turned briefly and the lights went out. The thunder of spontaneous applause in his ears, John stumbled to his feet and made for the open.

IT WAS AFTER the show, and John was in Trixie's dressing room. She came in after the finale and kicked the door shut. The harsh lights glittered in her impossible hair and her covered bosom rose and fell with her breathing. She fastened her hard eyes on John.

"Listen, Fellow," she said, and her voice was as hard as her mascaraed eyes, "I believe you when you tell me you're an artist and that you genuinely want to paint me naked; but listen. I may do a strip tease in a burlesque; but I'm a decent girl. I don't show my body to no man in private unless I want him to see it and touch it."

"There's only one way to find that out, isn't there?" John said, and his voice was a little husky.

Trixie nodded. "Yeah," she said. She faced him squarely.

"Can I . . ." John laughed with embarrassment. Trixie smiled her hard, mechanical smile.

"Try me out. If I like your technique . . ."

John literally leapt toward her. Tough, hard-boiled and artificial, she possessed a frankness one did not meet every day, and she responded to his advances with the same gusto.

He took her in his arms and pressed his lips to hers. He steered her to the couch and pulled her to him. Through the thin dress she was wearing, he could feel the outline of every curve in her body, and his hand dropped to a slim, covered waist. He strained her to him, and Trixie deliberately pressed closer against him.

They broke apart. Trixie got to her feet. She staggered a little and she grasped the make-up shelf for support.

"You win," she said. "Wait until I lock the door."

John got up. His face was flushed and his hands trembled. Trixie came towards him again, and she was fumbling with the snaps on her dress. Something seemed to happen to John. A vision of Diana appeared all at once in the back of his mind, and he knew he could not go through with it. Forcing a smile, he said.

"Trixie, let's quit. I'll drive over and see you tomorrow, and if you still feel the same way about it . . ."

Trixie shrugged her shoulders. She did not seem at all bothered by the sudden turn of events, and John presently found himself back in Diana's roadster outside the theatre.

He drove thoughtfully back to the house. He drove slowly and several cars flashed past him. He did not care. Something had happened. Trixie no longer seemed to exist and he could not understand what had come over him in the theatre. He put the little car in the garage and walked up onto the terrace. In the subdued light over by a hammock, he noticed that the thoughtful butler had left a tray of food and drink, so John sat down and poured himself a whiskey. Flashing headlights and the drone of a heavy motor caused him to look up. He saw a huge limousine slide into the garage. At the same moment, Diana, in a trailing evening gown and a short cape, stepped up onto the terrace. She saw him and came towards him. John set aside his glass and rose to his feet.

Diana waved a languid hand. "Sit down," she said in her exasperating drawl. John did so and she joined him. They stared at each other.

"I thought you had a headache?" he demanded.

"I did—then." She smiled and lighted a cigarette. Her lovely face glowed in the small flame of the match. "How did you like the show?" she asked.

"So-so." John took a sip from his glass.

"And how did you enjoy the little session with Trixie Treadways?" Diana laughed banteringly up into his face.

John flushed. "Who told you about her?"

"I was she." Suddenly her drawl disappeared and in its stead was the tough, rough voice of the girl he had left not so long ago. Diana said, "I wore a wig and paid the real Trixie to let me have her job this evening. You see, I was determined that you'd make love to me. Why did you stop when you did?" The last sentence was uttered in her usual drawl, and her eyes were glittering in the soft lamplight.

(Please turn to page 64)



Picnic Madness!

By Claire Kennedy

"You didn't think this was such a mad idea when I suggested it," Bud said.

THE ramshackle little car wheezed, puffed, jerked violently and then lapsed into a state of quiet immobility which announced only one thing. It had stalled.

Shimmering, dancing waves of heat rose from the capless radiator. A fine layer of chalk-white dust, kicked up by the rear tires, settled on the hood.

"Stalled," Bud Mercer said, managing a grin.

The honey colored blonde at his side sniffed. Her fingers fidgeted with the bodice of a freshly starched linen dress. Beneath that bodice, for all its prim stiffness, Bud could see the outlines of firm young breasts, cone shaped and tip tilted. He could see, too, the slim, silk clad perfection

of Dawn Beverley's legs, stretched under the dashboard. Gosh, she was beautiful. Like a stalk of gold-yellow wheat, graceful and willowy. Her violet-blue eyes made him warm all over. Not just ordinary warmth. An *inside* warmth that caused his blood to pound. Her lips, always red and warm, seemed to beckon for ardent caresses. Just now they were pouting.

"I don't see anything so funny about it," she snapped. "I should have known better than to let you take me out in this *tin can*!"

Bud grinned. He snaked one arm about her waist, drew her close. Before she could protest he had kissed those magenta lips, even forced them apart. His free hand fumbled at her blouse, brushed against one firm, pointed hillock. Then the storm broke. Dawn jerked out of his arms.

"Don't touch me with your dirty hands!" she cried. "They're all grease! Look what you've done to my dress!"

Bud sighed wearily, slipped from behind the wheel, got out of the car. He removed his jacket and rolled up his sleeves. A half hour later he

was still struggling with the ancient motor. Now his hands *were* dirty; black with oil and grease. There was a gray smudge across one cheek. Perspiration dripped from his forehead. He pulled his head out of the hood, stood at the open door of the car.

"Can't do a thing with it, Dawn," he said. "The feed line is choked. We'll have to walk back to town and—"

"Walk back?" Her tone was horrified. "You want *me* to walk back? In these shoes?" She swung her feet out, calling his attention to the milky white kids she was wearing.

Bud paid less attention to the shoes than he did to the limbs above them. Dawn's skirts had worked up above her knees. He caught a glimpse of downy flesh above her rolled stockings. Bud's mouth went dry thinking of Dawn, all soft and smooth and curved.

"Well?" she barked. "What are you standing there and staring at me for? Why don't you do something? Picnic!" She spat the word out as though it were an expletive. "Of all the mad, insane ideas."

Bud was already hot under the collar. It didn't take much to make him mentally so. "You didn't think it was such a mad idea when I suggested it," he retorted. "Nobody told you to dress up in starched linen. You don't see me wearing tails, do you?"

His outburst stunned Dawn. For a long moment she was speechless. Her bosom rose and fell beneath her bodice, the excited hills clearly delineated. Her eyes flashed fire.

"You can't talk to me that way, Bud Mercer! You can't! You can't tell me what to wear! We're not married yet! I—I want you to understand that!"

"I understand. I understand everything." The heat and the dust and the dirt made it seem useless to argue and get boiled up over nothing at all. He ran the back of his hand over his brow. "I'm sorry I yelled, Dawn. I didn't mean it. After all, I couldn't help it if the car broke down. I didn't *make* it break down."

She snorted. "No, but you might have had more consideration for me than to take me out in a—a wreck like this! You know I detest dirt and smell!"

WITH DIFFICULTY, Bud restrained himself. "Well, what do you want me to do, wave a wand over the wreck and transform it into a Packard VI6 with a uniformed chauffeur? It's out of commission and I can't fix it. Either you'll wait

here and I'll walk back for a mechanic or you can come with me."

The dull roar of a motor sounded up the road. Bud shielded his eyes from the glaring rays of the sun.

"There's a car coming. Maybe he can help us."

A long, low maroon roadster swung up the road, stopped ten feet behind the stalled tin can. Dawn twisted around to look. Her eyes brightened.

"It's Kirk Lord!" she cried. "Oh, Kirk, Kirk!"

Bud's jaw tightened. He stood by in silence as Dawn, oblivious now to what the dusty roads might do to her white kid shoes, jumped out of his car and ran towards the roadster. He watched Kirk Lord step out to meet her. He had never liked the tall, sleekly parasitical son of J. C. Lord, president of the Third National Bank.

"Kirk, you're a life saver!" Dawn cried, dancing into his arms.

Bud fought down his anger. He looked at his greasy hands, at the dust covered, weebegone tin can. Well, maybe he didn't blame Dawn. Girls weren't supposed to get all dirty and ride in cars that were ready for the ash heap.

"Hello, Mercer," Kirk Lord called patronizingly. "How did you get that *thing* out *this* far?"

Bud forced a smile. "I'll get it back, too," he retorted.

"There's nothing like trying. I'll take Dawn along with me. No sense her hanging around."

Not a word from Dawn. They got into the maroon roadster. It shot by Bud in a cloud of dust. He saw, through the brown haze, Dawn's smiling face. Then it was gone and there was nothing but grit in his mouth and black anger in his heart.

Bud made another attempt to get the tin can going. They hadn't even suggested notifying a mechanic, damn them! He stood erect, looked around.

There was a small, weather beaten cottage across the road. To all appearances it was unoccupied. There might be a pump, though, where he could get some water. The lemonade in the picnic basket didn't appeal to him. He wanted nothing connected with the picnic.

He crossed the road, walked over the unkempt front lawn, circled to the rear of the house. There was a pump and the dampness around its base signified its being in working order. With his mouth at the broad spigot, Bud brought up

cool, fresh water from the deep well. It splashed over his hot face, ran like precious nectar down his parched throat.

He was scarcely through when he heard a fearful rattling and banging at the front of the house. It grew louder. The next moment a car, more ancient than his, circled into the back yard, stopped with an asthmatic gasp.

She was wearing shorts and a turtle neck sweater, both designed to bring out the best points of her voluptuous figure. And they were some points! Through a dizzy haze Bud saw them jiggling in seemingly unbrassiered freedom. He saw, too, the sun tanned smoothness of her legs and the swaying lushness of her curved hips.



IT WASN'T THE CAR that amazed Bud. It was the girl driving the car. He looked at her once through the dusty windshield, looked at her again, kept looking at her. Either he was suffering from the heat or this locality was inhabited by wood sprites. No girl like this one could exist. She was gorgeous. Bud saw everything at once. Her dark, wavy hair; her black eyes; her rosebud lips. He waited, certain that the mirage would vanish, that in her place he would see a weather beaten old farmer.

But the mirage didn't vanish. It moved. The girl got out of the car, came towards him. Amazement became open-mouthed astonishment.

All doubt as to her being a creature of flesh and blood vanished when she spoke. "Hello," she greeted cheerily. "Is that your Rolls-Royce out on the road?"

Bud blinked as she approached. "Er—yes," he gulped.

"Run into trouble?" She stood in front of him, one hand on a jutting hip, her high, full form accentuated. The sweater clung to the conical hillocks with loving adhesion.

"Er—yes," Bud managed. "Feed line trouble."

She nodded. "That usually happens to these

old crates. I'll get my tools. Maybe I can help you."

Bud's astonishment increased by leaps and bounds as she rummaged in the back of her ancient car and came out with a kit of tools. As though it were quite the natural thing, she went out to the road and immediately set to work disconnecting the gas line.

A half hour later she stood by as Bud stepped on the starter. The motor coughed, spat, turned over. The feed line was clear! Bud turned off the ignition, slid out of the car. He gaped at the girl. Her hands were a mess of grease and oil. One strand of hair fell down over her left eye. There was a spot of black grease on her chin. She grinned.

"Well, that's that."

Bud was at a loss for words. This was something beyond comprehension. Instinctively he compared Dawn with this girl. Then and there he knew he had found what he had been looking for. With her dirty hands and the spot on her chin and the strand of hair falling over her eye she was still the most beautiful creature he had ever seen.

"I—I don't know how to thank you," he said. "It—it's almost—"

"Forget it." She waved a hand airily. "I think we both deserve a spot of lunch. Let's wash up and then I'll rustle out what I've got. Maybe some beans and broiled bacon and—"

"I have a full picnic basket!" Bud exclaimed. "Roast chicken and sandwiches and cake and fruit and lemonade."

"Bring it in!"

IN THE KITCHEN of the dilapidated house, Bud took the cover off the picnic basket. The girl peered inside.

"You don't mean to tell me you intended to devour all that food yourself?"

Bud colored. "Er—no, I—I didn't. You see, I had a girl with me. When the car stalled she—she got a little peeved. A friend of hers came along and took her back to town."

She nodded. "Oh, I see. Just a good sport."

"My—my fiancée," Bud added.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I shouldn't have said that."

"That's all right. She is a bum sport." He dug into the basket. "Chicken first?"

"Umm, yes."

There was just a heap of chewed chicken bones left when Bud dug into his pocket for a package of cigarettes, offered his dining partner one. They both lit up.

"That was swell," she said, leaning back in her chair, crossing her bare legs.

Bud ran his eyes up her figure. Her bosom was full and firm. There wasn't an excess ounce of fat on her body.

"Now that we've lunched together," he said, "it might be well to introduce ourselves. I'm Bud Mercer."

She laughed merrily. "I'd completely forgotten about that. You've shared your picnic basket with Carol Denning."

"Something puzzles me," Bud said. "In the first place, what are you doing in this dilapidated house? In the second place, how do you know so much about automobiles?"

Her dark eyes twinkled. She ran the fingers of one hand over her blouse. "I'm here because I wanted to get away from people for a while. And as for fixing your buggy, I've tinkered around with motors as long back as I can remember. I like to get my hands in grease. I guess I'm just a dirty person."

The words poured out of Bud's mouth. "I think you're a swell person! I've never met anyone like you! I'm glad my car broke down and I'm glad Dawn didn't have guts enough to stick it out with me. If she had I'd never have gotten so close to you."

Carol's lips pursed. "Close?"

Bud colored. "Well, you know what I mean."

"Yes, I suppose I do."

"How long have you been here?"

"Almost two weeks."

"Hasn't it been lonesome?"

Lights flashed in her eyes. "The nights are a little lonesome."

BUD'S PULSES POUNDED. Was she throwing out a hint? No, it was too good to be true. Still, it was nice to think about it. Even that made him tingle all over. He looked at her voluptuous curves. They were probably as soft as silk and as warm as a bunny's fur.

"Aren't you afraid?" he queried. "Out here all alone?"

"Not very. I'm not the fearful kind."

Bud glanced through the open kitchen door. He saw a cot in one corner of the front room. In another corner a table on which was a typewriter.

"Oh, you're a writer?" he gasped.

"Well, not exactly. I just sort of dabble at it."

"That's why you're out here, isn't it?"

"I suppose so." She rose, stretched. The globes of her breasts tightened. "I don't want

to keep you," she said. "Your fiancée is probably waiting for you in town."

Bud came to his feet. His heart was beating like a gong. He stood close to her, so close that the tips of her breasts almost touched his chest.

"I don't care whether she is or not. If you don't mind, Carol, I'd like to stay awhile." He seemed unconscious of the fact that he had used her given name.

She smiled up at him. "No, I don't mind, Bud," she said softly, swaying towards him.

As though an invisible hand were guiding their movements, they came into each other's arms. Carol's head was thrown back, her red lips parted. Bud lowered his mouth down on them, thrilling to their warmth. His hands slipped over her back, moved down to her curved hips, touched the ungirdled smoothness.

It was a long moment before they drew apart. Carol's bosom rose and fell with breathless rapidity.

"You shouldn't have done that," she murmured. "You really shouldn't have."

That one blissful embrace had raised Bud's blood to the boiling point. He was mad with desire. Never in all his life had he wanted a

woman as much as he wanted Carol Denning. To hold her in his arms and to drink the scented nectar of her lips, and to caress her as he desired.

"Didn't you want me to?" he questioned.

"It isn't that, Bud. It's something else. We shouldn't let emotion sway us that way."

HE EMBRACED HER AGAIN. This time his hand slid between them. His fingers curled about the plump, pulsating charms.

*"I'm crazy about you!
All my life I've dreamed
about a girl like you!" he
told her earnestly.*



"This isn't just excitement!" he gasped. "I've never met a girl like you and I've always wanted to."

She resisted the efforts of his lips to reach her mouth. "But what about your fiancée? You can't decide things like this in a moment. Bud, please!"

He released her, stepped back. Her cheeks were flushed and her breath came in hissing gasps.

"I told you I don't care about Dawn any more. Not since I met you!"

"But, Bud, you don't even know who I am. I may be anything and anybody." She pressed her hand against her breast. "Let's go out and try your car."

Together they walked to the road. Bud slipped behind the wheel of his tin can. Carol got in beside him. The motor turned over almost immediately, roared like a threshing machine. Bud shut it off.

"It's okay. Now let's talk about you." He turned towards her, imprisoned her hands in his. "What's the difference who you are? I'm crazy about you! All my life I've dreamed about a girl who could take it. You can. When I saw you standing next to this wreck with your hands all full of grease and a spot on your chin and your hair falling down over your eye, I knew I'd found the one I wanted."

Her eyes swam lustrously. "And you're sure it wasn't my tight fitting sweater and the shorts showing my legs?"

"No, it wasn't. That was only part of it. I liked you because you were different."

"And it wouldn't matter if I happened to be an escaped convict or a murderess or—or just an 'easy woman'?"

He swept her into his arms. "Nothing would matter. I'd like to go through life with a girl like you, doing things together. Dad left me a little money and a going business that doesn't need any attention. I'd like to travel to the far ends of the earth with you, just living."

She cuddled close to him. "So would I, Bud. I've always done it and I always want to do it. But what about Dawn? You must have loved her to become engaged to her."

"That was passion," he said.

"And this?"

"Love!" His hand snaked up under her sweater. At the first touch of his fingers against her bare flesh, she shuddered. A soft, pleading sigh escaped her lips.

Bud kept on. Nothing could stop him now. The whirlpool of desire drew him deep into its thrilling vortex. His groping fingers found bulging firmness, yearning, searching out the ecstasy of her charms.

He could feel her warm breath against his cheek; knew by the limpness of her body that she was yielding to his caresses. Her arms slid over his shoulders, pulled him down to the curved warmth of her body.

THEY BOTH HEARD the roar of a motor car. Bud looked up at the rear vision mirror. His eyes brightened.

"There's a car coming," Carol whispered.

He placed his mouth close to her lips. "I know it."

She tried to struggle loose but he held her.

"Bud!" Carol gasped. "Bud!"

It was too late. Kirk Lord's maroon roadster drew up alongside the tin can. Dawn, in the seat beside the banker's son, gaped in stark amazement at the scene before her.

Bud released Carol. She jerked her sweater down.

"Hello," Bud greeted.

Dawn's face was white. Kirk Lord was staring open-mouthed. Bud got out of his car, crossed to the roadster.

"I'll take my ring, Dawn," he said calmly.

She removed the diamond solitaire automatically. Kirk was the first to speak.

"Isn't that girl Carol Denning?" he gasped.

Bud frowned. "Yes. How do you know her?"

"She's the flyer!"

"Flyer?"

"Yes. She just circled the globe with Walter Weston!"

Bud smiled. "She's going to be my wife," he said, throwing the statement into Dawn's teeth.

Dawn shrieked: "Take me home, Kirk!"

When the roadster was just a cloud of dust in the distance, Bud walked back to the tin can.

"So, you're a famous woman flyer," he said moodily. "I thought my luck was too good. Maybe it was just passion . . ."

Carol held out her hand. "Put that ring on," she said. "You see, I came here to write my memoirs of the round-the-world flight but now my publisher will have to wait. There's a last chapter you and I must live together."

Fortunately, nobody saw what happened on that dusty country road. . . .

"LUCKY SEVEN"

By

Bobby Barnes

THE wail of the prison siren shattered the soft magic of the evening. She was already so late it didn't matter, besides no one was expecting her. Four years ago her friends had gotten over the habit of expecting her to reply in person to their invitations. The pleasure had gone out of the evening anyway. Even her pleasure in surprising them.

Janneth jammed on the brakes so hard she was nearly flung through the windshield as the siren wailed again. Poor devil, she hoped passionately he had escaped and wouldn't be caught. Janneth had a horror of anything behind bars. For four years she had lain in bed with the iron lace of her balconies throwing their etchings across her silken coverings. Now that she had been freed from that luxurious prison, the thought of anyone else being behind iron bars, hurt.

The searchlight from the prison tower slid a ghostly pencil of light across the roadster, pointing out a slim figure in brief scarlet, firecracker costume and velvet mask. She was on her way to her first dance, a Fourth of July masquerade and going alone.

Dick Arlington, who had been her fiance for two years, had promised to spend the holidays around the fourth with her then at the last moment his wire had come, postponing his arrival from the fourth to the Sunday following.

It had ruined her surprise but she couldn't blame him. He was a busy young doctor who had been called to attend her after the automobile accident. At first he had openly adored the fragile invalid in her exquisite negligees but she had known he was getting weary of worshipping at the shrine of a statuette. That was why she had let the doctors bring the famous spine specialist to treat her. He had been just a voice to her when he had come, in his surgical gown, head shrouded as was the custom, but he had wrought a miracle and Janneth walked after four years. She had gone away then to get strong, that Dick's surprise might be more wonderful, when he made his semi-annual visit. Before, on his visits, she had insisted he take Maralyn, the girl from next door, dancing, to relieve his boredom.

Janneth gave the box containing the costume she had bought for Dick, a kick with her slim, scarlet sandalled foot. Her own costume had been chosen to show as much of her body as possible so he might see that she was physically fit to be his mate. Well, she'd kick the box out at the bridge and let it sink to the bottom of the river. Everything was spoiled.

SHE SAT THERE a moment longer, the searchlight swinging slowly over the countryside, thrusting an inquiring finger into every bush. It fell on a car parked up on the bridge. Maralyn's car. Janneth grinned because the light showed up the couple as though they were thrown on a screen. They were very, very busy and whatever Maralyn's costume had been, it wasn't now, for she looked partially nude.

"Hello, firecracker," said a voice, from the willows beside the river. "Don't scream."

"I'm not the screaming kind," Janneth retorted composedly, but her heart increased its beat for the searchlight had touched briefly a leg in the blue and white stripes worn by Mississippi convicts. "You're the escaped prisoner the siren's screaming about, aren't you? Isn't it dangerous to hang around so close to the prison?"

"What can I do on foot?" the voice asked.

"Not much," admitted Janneth. "And in half a minute the roads will be covered by police cars."

"Don't I know it? You wouldn't help me?"

"They'll search my car," Janneth was reluctant to refuse help. She wouldn't even keep a canary, let alone shutting up a man behind bars.

"You shouldn't be driving alone with convicts loose," reproved the voice.

"I didn't plan to." Janneth's voice died away. She bent and picked up the box containing Dick's costume. "See, here's a costume I bought for a friend who didn't show up. Get into it quickly. It's a domino. When the excitement dies down I'll see what I can do to help you further."

"You're a little fool but I'm accepting your aid." A long white hand reached from the bushes and took the box and there were rustlings in the

bushes then the escaped convict stepped into the light from Janneth's dims.

He was taller than Dick but she had allowed for a bad memory so the amber satin domino was long enough. The cap hid his head which would be shaven, Janneth knew. The mask hid just his eyes and his mouth was stern but there was a cleft in his chin that eased the strain about his lips.

"You drive," she said, "it will look more natural. What'll I call you?"

The convict lifted the suit. "The number seems to be 7000," he mused. "Suppose you call me Sev." He tossed the suit into the rumble and came around to slide under the wheel.

"What'd you do?" Janneth asked a trifle nervously. It was one thing to pity a caged convict, another to be sitting beside him.

"Nothing that isn't done every day, but I was caught," he said, sitting at ease behind the big wheel.

Up the road came the siren of a state police car.

"You'll have to pretend to make love to me," Janneth said quickly.

Sev quickly put his arm around Janneth under the cape she wore. "Of course you know if I were truly your lover I'd object to that bodice," he muttered.

Janneth gasped a little. "You . . . you can take off the shoulder straps," she said nervously.

HE SLID THE CAR to a stop beside the road as the siren came nearer, and pulled the bodice straps down just as the powerful spotlight of the police car poured over them.

"Nuts!" came one of the officers' disgusted voice. "Petters." The car rushed on.

Janneth tried to adjust her bodice but Sev's hand still held her closely to his side.

"You may have to give me a name shortly. What other man do you know beside this one who didn't show up?" Sev asked quickly.

"No one who won't be at the dance. Wait, you could be Dr. Minter. He's the surgeon who cured me. I never saw his face. He never shows himself to his patients. Too rushed for personalities. That is it. You can be Dr. Minter if we are cornered."

"Queer, I was a doctor," Sev mused. "Operating, too, but one too many operations was my undoing."

"That isn't so terrible," Janneth said indifferently. "But I'm glad you told me. Shall we go on?"

His arm was still tight about her bare shoulders and his arm was so long his fingers curved over one charm, lightly, but they burned and started a

pulse. She wasn't in a hurry to go on and he seemed to read her mind.

"Must we hurry?" he asked, moving his fingers over soft warm flesh.

"N . . . no." Janneth wet her lips.

"I've been shut away from girls so long, the touch of you thrills me." Sev turned toward Janneth and pushed up the mask so, in the light from the dash, she could see burning dark eyes devouring her face. A nice face too, for all his criminal record.

She was beginning to respond in an alarming way to his exciting caresses.

"You mustn't," Janneth said faintly, but her body curved toward his. How tragic that the first man to treat her like a warm blooded girl had to be an escaping convict.

Her tongue moved over suddenly dry lips for he was pressing her closer to him and paying no attention to her half hearted protests. Sev leaned forward and his lips fastened over Janneth's warm red mouth.

Janneth's hands pressed against the satin domino and found his heart beating as he strained her against him.

Ahead Maralyn's car was parked again. Evidently the interlude on the bridge hadn't been enough. Another car roared up and turned its spotlight on Janneth's car then went on but it broke the spell Sev had put on her and Janneth freed herself.

"Drive on . . . we'll be too late to tell my hostess good night," she commanded.

Smiling, Sev obeyed and sent the car up the hill to the big house.

THEY WERE LATE but all the better Janneth thought and wondered if anyone would recognize Sev as the doctor who had been sent to prison. He was devastatingly handsome, she decided, as they walked to the house. His hands had been well cared for and strong if showing his confinement by their whiteness. He'd probably worked in the prison hospital.

Janneth left her cape in the car and stepped forth in her ballet dress made of red firecrackers. There was a wreath of the crackers in her pale gold hair. Every step showed her thighs for she wore no hose and her skirt was breathlessly brief. Somewhere, lost among the firecrackers, were very brief panties.

In the doorway she stopped and grew pale for Maralyn was coming in another door, Maralyn rather disheveled as to costume, and her companion was Dick, Janneth's Dick. He was un-

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a week and sing her heart out. She would have her dinners paid for and would eat very lightly otherwise and as she was to live in Carole's cottage rent free, most of the fifty would go to Virginia.

The cottage was a very lovely place of glass and creamy wicker and shining tiled floors with the Sound pouring past on a snow white beach right in front, and the old Spanish Trail nearby.

Kindy wasn't lonely. She loved being alone, especially without Tom Lax waiting to pounce and paw. She was quite happy until Dolf Autumn came to call to make arrangements for her singing.

SHE HAD BEEN swimming in front and came running in, in a very abbreviated bathing suit and, sitting in the livinghall which went from front to back gallery, was a very big, very blond young man with football shoulders and athlete's slim waist and the frostiest hazel eyes Kindy had ever looked into.

He rose reluctantly to six feet two. "Carole Kindred?" he asked coldly.

"Yes. I'm called Kindy," Kindy said helpfully.

"No doubt at all. I'm Dolf Autumn. We begin work tomorrow night at the Inn-by-the-Ocean. We play for the dinner hour and dancing afterwards. It's a mile up the seawall. You can take a bus." All this in a pineapple ice voice that made goose bumpers run up and down Kindy's arms.

"Thank you. I shall probably walk."

He smiled bleakly, his look running over her. "I doubt it. Two things also, nothing indecent in the way of dresses, and leave my boys alone. As long as you leave them alone, you and I will get along all right. Don't expect me to have an affair with you; that's out. Good-bye." He turned and went out, unbelievably handsome and blond in his crisp white linens, a pink crepe myrtle bloom on the lapel.

Kindy dropped into the chair he had vacated, her lovely mouth distinctly ajar. "Well, Caro's reputation couldn't be too savory with that young icicle. Burr . . . I'd as soon have an affair with an electric refrigerator!" But her cheeks were painfully red nevertheless.

The next night she met the "boys", and found them a pink-cheeked, tanned bunch of rascals who liked her at once and showed it. They took her home in a body when they found she meant to walk and it was a gay crowd that went into Kindy's cottage to open their pints and plan to stock Kindy's icebox with mixes for after-dance gatherings. One lingered, the pinkest cheeked and youngest of them all.

He looked very much fussed. "I don't like your living here alone. Now listen . . . I'm from Virginia too and I've got an aunt who lived with her son in a house with half a dozen kids. They work her to death and if you'd take her in and let me pay you board for her and pretend she was your companion for her board, so she wouldn't guess, it would be swell all around. She won't take charity from me but if I could give you ten a week to keep her . . . well that's how it is."

"You give me ten and I'll pay her five of it," Kindy planned. "I can't afford a companion because I'm sending forty-five a week home to my mother, but five would feed her and it will be swell."

WHICH WAS HOW it happened that Aunt Molly came to the cottage on the beach, the cottage with its unsavory name, because once it had belonged to Andre Chain's young bride and she had come home unexpectedly from the east to find Carole Kindred there with Andre and hotly deeded the place to Carole and left Andre and never come back.

So Kindy would have been left very much alone had it not been for Aunt Molly, and Aunt Molly's presence made it all right for the boys, so every yawning the Autumn Knights walked the mile down the seawall to the cottage where Aunt Molly was routed out and they had breakfast and a few short ones and went home, to the hotel where Dolf Autumn slept the sleep of the just.

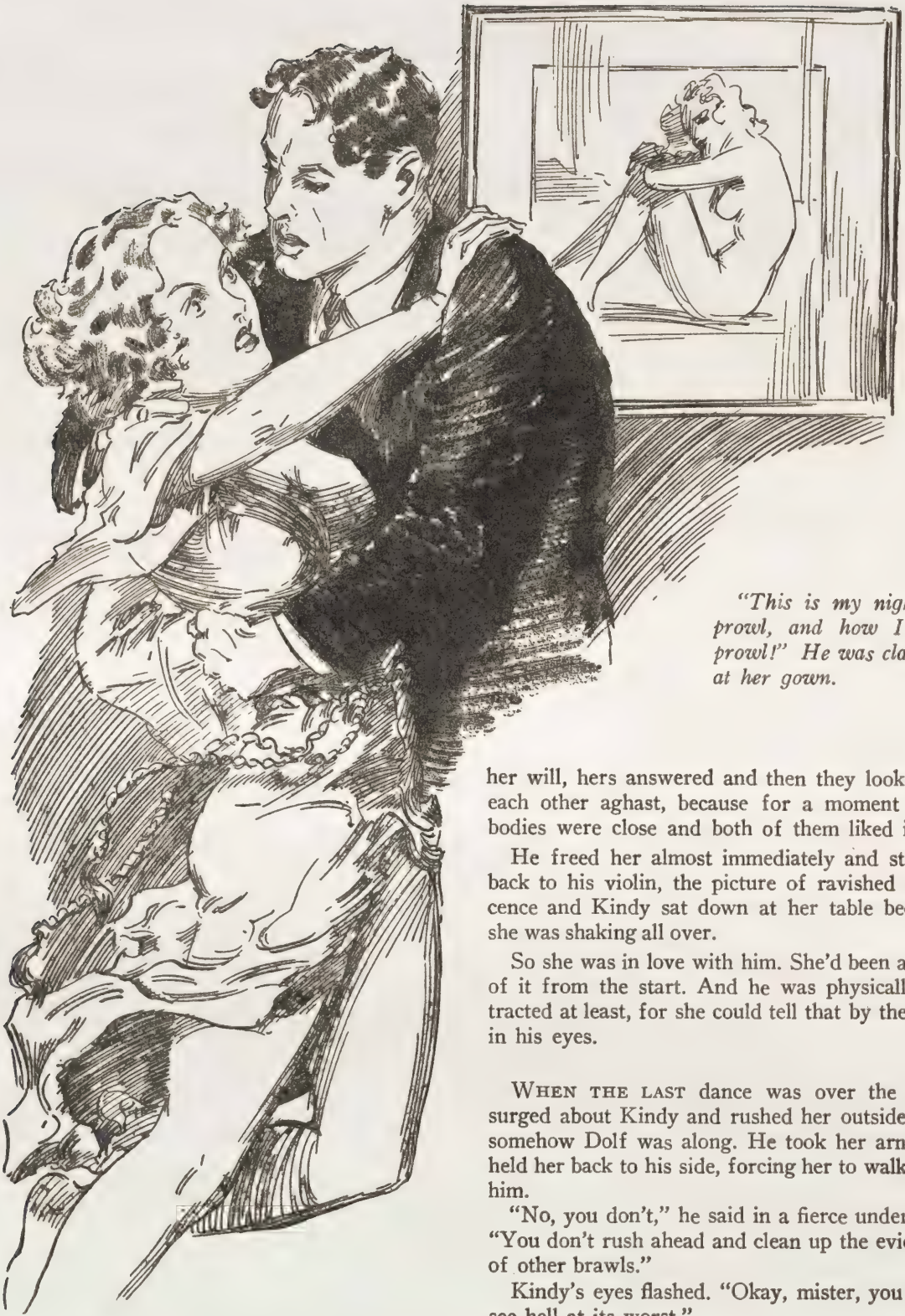
When Dolf tumbled that Kindy was disobeying his orders, after hearing two of his boys quarreling because one had forgotten to send bacon up for their community breakfast at Kindy's cottage, he laid down his violin and sought Kindy out where she sat at the table alone waiting for her last song.

"Dance?" he asked bluntly, and fairly dragged her onto the floor. "I want to talk to you," he gritted, looking like a cross between a mother bear and a lion. "I told you to leave my boys alone!"

Kindy bit her lip because he was holding her so fiercely she could feel every muscle in his body and it was rather warming. "Tell your boys to leave me alone then," she suggested sweetly. "Or why not come to my iniquitous cottage and see for yourself just how I'm leading them astray."

"I expected that, but I will, and it will be the last time. I'll read the riot act to them there and tell them it means your job. I think that will free them of that devilish something you have."

Kindy looked up at him, color washing into her face. "You feel I have something?" she asked in-



"This is my night to prowl, and how I will prowl!" He was clawing at her gown.

her will, hers answered and then they looked at each other aghast, because for a moment their bodies were close and both of them liked it.

He freed her almost immediately and stalked back to his violin, the picture of ravished innocence and Kindy sat down at her table because she was shaking all over.

So she was in love with him. She'd been afraid of it from the start. And he was physically attracted at least, for she could tell that by the look in his eyes.

WHEN THE LAST dance was over the band surged about Kindy and rushed her outside, and somehow Dolf was along. He took her arm and held her back to his side, forcing her to walk with him.

"No, you don't," he said in a fierce undertone. "You don't rush ahead and clean up the evidence of other brawls."

Kindy's eyes flashed. "Okay, mister, you shall see hell at its worst."

They made the mile to the cottage and rushed in pell mell. Coffee smells came to meet them and there was the little old lady with her white hair

nocently, longing to slap him out of his smugness.

His arm tightened and wholly against his own will his body asked hers a question, and, against

and quilted robe, standing over a toast machine.

"Aunt Molly, this is Mr. Autumn, Benny's and my boss. This is my companion, Mr. Autumn. She is also Benny's aunt. He found her for me right away and she insists on getting up when I'm due home, to get breakfast for this ravenous crowd. You're our guest this morning but after this when you come, every eighth morning you have to furnish two pounds of bacon."

Dolf stared at her then around at the grinning faces of his boys, and a slow grin and flush chased over his face.

"You win," he said enigmatically.

Kindy wasn't too pleased to have Dolf added to the hilarious crowd in the cottage but he came nevertheless, and since his boys were extremely attached to him, they were glad to have him. If they sensed the enmity between him and his little singer, not one of them seemed to notice it.

The crepe myrtles were gone and poinsettias beginning to flame along the cottage wall and the honeymooners made a wide swing around and came to a pause at the Inn-by-the-Ocean. Sheer malice on Carole's part. She wanted to see how Kindy had fitted into her shoes as Adrian Chain's ex-sweetheart, and she was bored too, with being a model wife. Tom Lax was remembering the throbbing white throat he had kissed, the body under the robe which he had had only quarter time enough to explore, so here they were, and made their appearance during Kindy's first song.

SHE WAS SINGING of green fields and bluebirds and thinking of Virginia when she saw Carole's fair, malicious face staring up at her, and Tom's hot brown eyes. She faltered then went on singing. If they came to live at the cottage . . . well, she'd leave, that was all.

Tom went to the bar and Kindy left her table at Carole's imperious finger and went over and sat down with her.

"You're still here," Carole said maliciously. "I thought Dolf Autumn would throw you out on your ear the first week."

"Why?" gasped Kindy.

"Because the cottage you're living in belonged to his kid sister, Andre's wife, and she left him when she found me there with Andre . . . but deeded the cottage to me. Naturally I never had the nerve to live there afterwards. Dolf gave Andre the job for me with the understanding it ended things between us. I didn't tell Andre I was getting married. Why, I don't know. After I saw you and Tom making feverish love, I was glad I didn't."

Kindy sat still, her cheeks burning hotly, eyes staring blackly at her cousin.

"You know I didn't let Tom make love to me," she said, wetting her lips.

"Are you telling me that whopper?" Carole asked maliciously. "Well, let it pass. I'm sick of married life and so is Tom. I want to meet Dolf Autumn. You can stay on in the cottage. Tom and I will stay here."

Tom was back. "Dance, Kindy?"

"After I meet Dolf Autumn," Carole said sweetly and rose and stood waiting and Kindy could do nothing but go over to Dolf with the pair and introduce them, then Tom swept her away across the floor.

"I've counted the days," he breathed heavily, as he clamped Kindy to him and steered her into the thickest of the crowd.

"Well I haven't and if you think you can repeat what happened at Carole's you're mistaken. You aren't even to call on me," blazed Kindy, trying to pull free and only succeeding in making Tom dance harder, but always in one spot. "Stop that!" she whispered fiercely. "Do you want to be put off the floor?"

"Stop what?" Tom asked innocently. "Am I to blame if you respond to me?"

Kindy's cheeks flamed but he forced her to keep on in the thickest of the crowd until the dance was over. In spite of herself her body was leaping flame. Tom's eyes were full of leering laughter when she returned to her table.

Dolf came and drew Kindy to her feet, as the music started again.

"I wonder if you think I'm going to stand by and watch you complete your ruin of your lovely cousin's marriage?" he asked hotly. "She told me how she found you together and has had no peace until they came here so he could be with you."

"It isn't true," gasped Kindy. "He forced himself on me. I hate him. You've got to believe. If I could only tell you but I can't." She didn't owe a thing to Carole now but her promise still stood there, the promise of a Bellamy and it meant a lot to Kindy. She'd been brought up to keep her word at no matter what cost.

Dolf's arms tightened. "I suppose a girl like you gets used to men, and my boys' impersonal adoration doesn't satisfy you," he muttered.

"Don't hold me so close," begged Kindy, afraid of the fires Tom had kindled.

"But I want to," he said triumphantly. "I've wanted to from the first. You call out something in every man, I believe. Even I seem not to be able to help myself. I can pity Andre now for the first time."

He was holding her closer and closer and now he danced her through the French windows onto the dark gallery where other couples swayed slowly to the soft music.

Kindy was silent. She could fight no longer against the clamor of her own pulses. He was holding her tightly and she wet her lips they felt so dry. When she did he swooped down and captured those warm red lips with his own mouth for reeling minutes. Useless to keep from responding. Kindy's breath came in a hopeless sob as she felt her lips move against Dolf's.

"I said I wouldn't . . . but send those boys away and the aunt to bed," he said fiercely, and kissed her throat, his wavy hair warm against her lips.

"No, no, I won't! I won't!" Kindy's lashes were wet.

"All right," he said coldly, and released her and stalked away.

Kindy got herself together, used her make-up kit and went back to sing her song and watch Carole triumphantly carry Dolf away to the garden at intermission.

The boys surrounded her as always and bore her out of reach of Tom, to the bar where they had their usual drinks and went back to work. They stayed with her after the last dancer left the floor. Tom had been taken away roaring drunk but Carole sat on and when Kindy left with the band, Carole and Dolf were starting for the garden again.

FOR A WEEK hell raged in the orchestra. Kindy had her chair put between Benny and the drummer, so Tom couldn't even talk to her, let alone be alone with her, but she had to watch Dolf and Carole. Dolf spent every minute he wasn't on duty leaning over Carole and she did not wear modest gowns so he did not miss much of the body out of the gown or in it.

Then Dolf kept the boys to rehearse and Kindy went down the seawall alone to her cottage. She wasn't sorry. She had to think. She couldn't stand the strain much longer. Tom hadn't showed up for three nights but Carole had been there, nestled close to Dolf while dancing, and he seemed to like it. But what man didn't, when Carole exerted herself.

Kindy's lips twisted. Let the poor fool go on. She hurried into the cottage, only one light burned and that was in the livinghall. The kitchen was silent and dark. No Aunt Molly. But Tom Lax lay at ease on the wicker divan. He rose, his snaky look crawling over Kindy.

"Where's Aunt Molly?" she demanded. "What are you doing here?"

"Aunt Molly's son had a sick child, or that was Carole's story. Carole took her home herself and got her inside before Aunt Molly found they were under quarantine. Now she'll have to stay until they lift it. Scarlet fever. Too bad?" grinned Tom.

"All right, now you can get out too and quarantine yourself for a good case of smallpox," blazed Kindy, angrier than she had ever been in her life.

"Oh, no I won't." Tom rose, and she saw he was wearing a robe over pajamas.

He caught her wrists and jerked her down on the divan with him. "Don't think you can scream because no one would come to the aid of the girl they consider Andre Chain's old sweetheart. They would say you were trying to be sensational. And if you tell, Carole will tell your mother things about you that will make her unhappy. This is my night to prowl and how I will prowl." He was clawing at her gown and Kindy fought, deathly afraid for once in her life. She'd never had his kind to deal with. Always the boys had protected her from drunken guests at the resort hotel and now she saw what they had saved her. But they couldn't save her now and Carole had aided Tom in getting rid of her chaperon.

Tom was strong, driven on by his passions and he stripped the electric blue gown from Kindy like so much tissue paper. Kindy was fighting but losing the fight. He made a snatch at the tissue thin teddy. "Going kittenish on me all of a sudden, huh?" he snarled. "Going to make me fight for your kisses, this time."

Something in his voice made Kindy still as death. In the doorway was Carole and Dolf. Dolf looked like an outraged young knight and Carole burst into wild tears and hid her face on Dolf's white mess jacket.

"Take me away . . . this is the end . . . my own cousin and Tom . . . I'll get a divorce . . . I'm through!"

Kindy rose and tore down a curtain at the nearest window and wrapped it around her. "You can all get out!" she cried. "This is a frameup, and I'm through . . . you, Carole. You took Aunt Molly home and got her into the house before she saw they were under quarantine . . . you planned this. Well, you've succeeded, now get out!"

TOM WENT, BEFORE the blazing fury in Kindy's face, and Dolf and Carole followed. Kindy turned off the light and ran down the hall to her room and threw herself face down on the bed.

Carole had beaten her on every count. It was

too late to make Dolf believe Carole was the one to whom the deed of the cottage belonged . . . to whom the name of mistress belonged.

By and by Kindy got up and began packing. Luckily she had been paid the night before and this being Sunday, could not get the money out to her mother. She'd leave on the early train and chop cotton with her mother's aged negroes before she'd have anything more to do with Dolf or Carole.

She packed and then went to bed for a few hours sleep. Her train left at nine and, because it had been Sunday, they stopped dancing at midnight. She could sleep six hours or at least rest.

How long Kindy had been asleep she did not know but she wakened reluctantly from a wonderful dream of Dolf's arms around her, Dolf's kisses on her mouth and found arms about her and a mouth pressed tightly to hers. For a moment, deadened by sleep, she submitted and in



" . . . and leave my boys alone!" he demanded.

that minute the thought came that Dolf was here, Dolf believed her bad and all she'd have of love was here in his arms now. Dolf had been drinking, trust Carole for that. Tomorrow, when he was sober, for he couldn't be sober now or he wouldn't be here . . . well, he'd hate her tomorrow but tonight he loved her.

She sighed against his lips and her bare arm stole around his neck. "I'm through fighting," she murmured, when he saw she was awake, and took away his mouth to bury it against her throat. "Some day you're going to find out a lot of things . . . things Carole made me swear on my honor

as a Virginia Bellamy, to keep still about. . . ."

"Honor . . . what is honor?" mumbled Dolf against her throat. "I'm through fighting you, Kindy. I want you. I'm here. What you going to do about it?"

"Love you, love you, love you," Kindy's voice was like a murmuring song.

She gave him her mouth freely, kiss for kiss until she was drunk from the sweetness of him. Daylight came, Kindy sadly roused herself, dressed and stole away to get the bus.

Behind her she left all the clothes Carole had given her. She went away in a shabby leftover

linen suit and rowdy straw hat left from her lean days, so when the train was searched at the junction for a glamorous young girl dressed in the height of fashion, the shabby girl curled up asleep in the day coach was entirely missed by the searchers.

KINDY TOLD HER mother the story except the few heavenly hours spent with Dolf. It did not hurt her mother as Carole had threatened it would. It looked as though Ann Bellamy had had experience with Carole's kind before. She had used little of Kindy's money so there would be enough until the figs came on to the market in the spring and the cotton was ginned, and that would take them through the winter.

Kindy had thought her love interlude with Dolf would take her through the winter too but it didn't. It seemed one could never store up love experiences against a famine, as her thoughts nightly reminded her.

The radio told of the new singer with Dolf Autumn's band, Carole Lax, recently divorced from Tom Lax. It was the last straw. Kindy began to look as haunted as she had when meals were three times a week instead of three times a day.

No good to tell herself Dolf was too gullible a fool to waste love upon.

The columnist from New York, who wrote of his stay on the coast gave Kindy one cheering thought.

"The gorgeous, dreamy-eyed contralto soloist who was formerly with Autumn's Knights had it all over the rather obvious blonde singer who is billing and cooing around the frosty-eyed violinist — maestro of the Knights."

One day when the Blue Ridge was painted with autumn's brush, Ann Bellamy had a caller. She did not call Kindy to help entertain him, and he was a stranger to Kindy so she didn't do more than wonder why her mother did not call her, and went on picking muscadines for market. The caller was a burned-out man with haunted eyes and after he had gone, Ann Bellamy still said nothing and Kindy was too proud to ask about him.

The Autumn Knights were New York-bound, said the papers, after a successful season. Well Kindy's hopes of going to New York with them were past. She'd be chained to the old plantation and her mother's wheel chair the rest of her life. One thing, Carole would never dare show her face here . . . but Carole did. She drove in one day in her tan and chromium roadster and fairly ran

through the gardens to where Kindy was cutting a great sheaf of chrysanthemums.

Kindy turned, and when she recognized her cousin, gave her such a blasting look of fury that Carole backed away from the cutting shears, terrified. But she had an errand to do if it killed her and plunged into it.

"Kindy, you've got to help me. You never liked Dolf and he despised you but he doesn't despise me. He wants to marry me but when Andre heard I was singing in Dolf's band and the columnists prattled we were crazy about each other, he came to warn Dolf not to marry me.

"I found out he was coming and hid, pretending to be sick, and Dolf told him he had hired you, but you had left and your cousin was now working for him, a pure sweet girl. Dolf had previously tried to get me to tell him where you lived in Virginia but I wouldn't, as you had had to stand enough from me and my scraps. Well, Andre said he had to show him he no longer hired the girl called Kindy . . . that's what Andre used to call me too, you see . . ." Carole came nearer since Kindy made no move to slay her.

"So Dolf and I are coming here and you've got to make believe Andre was your lover once. No, just insist you are Carole to Dolf, and that will be enough. Pretend you know Andre. I'll never bother you again as long as I live. I'm peniless, Kindy. I didn't take any alimony because I thought Dolf meant to marry me as soon as I was free. Please, please . . . you promised and you know a Bellamy never breaks a promise."

Kindy shivered and backed away from Carole. "Ugh! If you knew what I think of you and Tom. Tom, for forcing his lovemaking on me when I loathed him the minute I saw him. For all your cheap plots to get rid of Aunt Molly so you could plant Tom there and show Dolf we were together . . . you're lower than the rattlesnake old Mose and I killed in the garden this morning. If pretending to Dolf that I am still Andre Chain's mistress, will clear you all out of my life forever, bring them on."

Carole shrank back shaking her head. "No, they mustn't know I've been here. I'll hide until they have gone, then drive on to New York and be waiting there for Dolf."

"Get going then," Kindy commanded harshly. "I can't stand the sight of you polluting the garden."

"Just a minute though and you can fumigate the garden after all of us," a tired voice said, and her mother's caller of the week before, stepped into sight and, following him, was the tall blonde

man who had been with Kindy through busy days and nights of pure torture, Dolf Autumn.

"We heard the whole conversation," continued Andre Chain. "I had a letter from a lovely lady, saying her daughter had assumed a great load of a cousin's troubles because she rashly made a promise. She asked me to come and help her clear it up so her daughter would no longer look so haunted. I tried to explain to this madman that the very lovely girl I saw here at a distance was not the girl who turned my head for one brief week and drove my wife, Dolf's sister away. He wouldn't believe, so we came here to see you in person."

"You're greedy, sometimes," gasped Kindy.



DOLF'S UNHAPPY EYES looked from one girl to the other. From Carole, dressed in the height of fashion in smart fall clothes, to Kindy in faded slacks and wornout pullover, bare feet in sandals. He shook his head. Nothing fitted. Looking at the two it seemed impossible that Andre could look at Carole after seeing Kindy. Kindy, even in her ragged old work clothes was glamorous. Carole was worn out. But there had been the amazing conversation Andre had forced him to listen to as they stood outside, so he had to believe that Kindy had never been anything to Andre, and

how he wanted to. But Andre was continuing . . .

"I never saw her before in my life, Dolf, except at a distance. She's ten years younger than Carole, but Carole is a blonde so looks about her age. . . ."

"It's all right, Andre, I believe you now. I've been half mad thinking I loved the girl who ruined my sister's life, but nevertheless I loved

her madly. I had men follow her looking for her at the junction, when she ran away, but they failed to find her, so I gave up then. Carole wouldn't tell me where she lived." Dolf looked at Kindy, who stood like a statue, the sunlight making blue lances in her hair. His broad shoulders drooped. "I'm sorry, Kindy. I should have known, but the cards were stacked. I don't suppose you'd take back your place in the band and let me see you every night until you decide I've been punished enough."

"Dolf! I have to live!" wailed Carole.

"Do you?" Dolf asked coldly. "Why?" and turned his back on her again. "Will you, Kindy?"

"I will under one condition," Kindy said pushing back her heavy hair. "That you hush about that forgiveness stuff and start in . . . well, I guess I'll leave that to you if you don't

(Please turn to page 63)

Perfect Interference

By

Mitzi Mason

IT was still a little early for the crowd. The beach was practically empty. Jerry Riley ran down the sloping white sand, dove cleanly into the white flecked green of a breaker. He swam out beyond the ropes where the sea was a placid stretch of topaz blue.

Gee, it was swell to be down at the shore! Of course, the commuting to New York wasn't so hot, but it was worth it, if only for Mom's sake. She deserved a summer away from the broiling city. And the cottage he had rented was perfect. There was only one drawback. The week-ends were dull. There didn't seem to be a girl worth looking at at Seaview. They were either too stout or too thin; too old or too young.

It wasn't usual, either. Summer resorts generally were top heavy with pretty girls. But not Seaview. Here it was Sunday and he had nothing to do and nobody to do it with.

He shrugged, dived like a porpoise, headed back towards shore. There was a breeze blowing when he walked out of the water. He felt chilly, decided to run along the beach.

Gradually, as he jogged along, the beach bungalows thinned out and he left civilization behind him. He ran for more than a mile, enjoying the loosening of his muscles, the way they rippled under his tanned skin. It was hard to believe that he was out of college three years. It seemed like only yesterday when he crossed the Navy goal line in that last big game; when he ran off the field with the roar of the crowd in his ears.

He slowed down to a walk, breathing evenly. Ahead of him he saw a rock wall extending down into the water and running far up on the beach. Beyond the wall he could see the red roofs of a three gabled mansion, windows glittering in the sun.

Curiosity impelled him to climb up and look beyond the wall. He saw a private beach, spotless and milky white, dotted with colored umbrellas and beach chairs. But that wasn't what caught his eye and held his breath in his lungs. It was something much more animate. It was a girl! Yes, a girl in a one-piece white silk

bathing suit! A girl with a figure unlike anything Jerry had ever seen before.

She was doing calisthenics at the water's edge, bending over and touching her toes, then throwing her shoulders back and her arms wide. Jerry sat on the wall and gaped. Her back was towards him. She had slim, brown legs and rounded thighs that melted into gently curved hips. The legs of her suit were daringly short. Each motion she made tightened the white silk over the twin breasts jutting like miniature melons from her chest.

At a glance Jerry knew she was class. The house, the private beach and the very tilt of her piquant nose told the story. But blue blood or not, he knew he had to make her acquaintance. He had all summer ahead of him. It was going to be pretty dull unless he did meet someone like her.

He thought of dropping to the private beach and introducing himself. No, that wouldn't do. Society dames were inclined to be snooty. He had to think of some other way. An idea flashed through his mind. It was perfect. He climbed down on the public beach, ran along the stone wall to the water. It extended out for approximately a hundred yards to where the sea deepened.

Jerry swam out alongside the wall until he reached the point where it was at water level. He slipped over it, dived deep. When he came up he was directly opposite the girl, about fifty yards off shore. The tide was going in. He knew if he floated on the swell he would be carried in. He turned over on his back, closed his eyes, relaxed.

IT SEEMED LIKE HOURS before he felt the sandy bottom under him. What if she'd gone in? He was about to look when a high pitched scream broke the silence. Jerry jammed his eyes shut, rolled over on his face. He heard her feet splashing in the water, felt himself being lifted, dragged.

What happened next was almost too good to believe. The girl pulled him up on shore, turned him over on his stomach. She kneeled

and slipping her hands under his stomach, started artificial respiration.

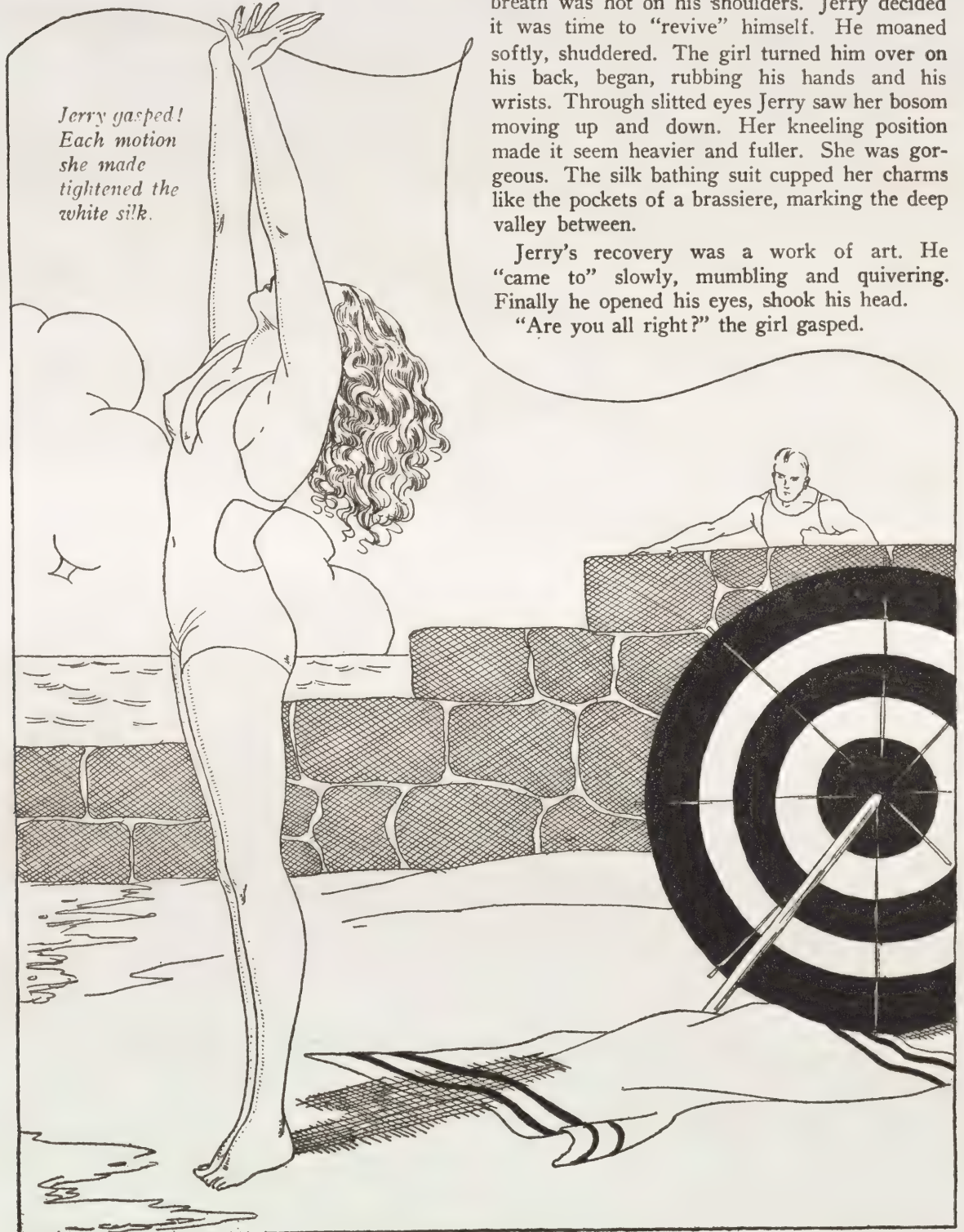
Jerry heard her panting breathing. It made his own breath hard to control. The warmth of her hands burned through his wet bathing

suit. Once or twice he was certain he felt soft curves against his back. He *knew* he felt her velvet legs against his. It was all one step from heaven.

He could tell when she began to tire. Her breath was hot on his shoulders. Jerry decided it was time to "revive" himself. He moaned softly, shuddered. The girl turned him over on his back, began, rubbing his hands and his wrists. Through slitted eyes Jerry saw her bosom moving up and down. Her kneeling position made it seem heavier and fuller. She was gorgeous. The silk bathing suit cupped her charms like the pockets of a brassiere, marking the deep valley between.

Jerry's recovery was a work of art. He "came to" slowly, mumbling and quivering. Finally he opened his eyes, shook his head.

"Are you all right?" the girl gasped.



*Jerry gasped!
Each motion
she made
tightened the
white silk.*

Her voice sent a shudder through Jerry. It was deep and throbbing. For a long moment he didn't answer. Just stared at her deep blue eyes, at her honey colored hair cascading about her shoulders, at her ripe, luscious red lips. Then he smiled, faintly.

"Yes, thanks. What—what happened?"

She suddenly became conscious of her unorthodox position. Her cheeks pinked as she got to her feet. Jerry sat up, rubbed a hand over his forehead.

"What happened?" he repeated.

The girl drew a deep breath. "I—I don't know. I—I saw you floating face down in—the shallow water."

Jerry nodded. "I remember now. I went swimming far out when I felt faint. Something happened to me." His eyes met hers. "I can't tell you how much I appreciate this. You probably saved my life."

She seemed embarrassed. "It—it's nothing. Can I get you a drink of water or—or some whiskey?"

"No, thanks. I'll be all right now. I shouldn't have tried to swim so far. I started from Sea-view."

SHE KNEELED DOWN in the sand, toyed with the white specks, let them slide through her fingers. Jerry knew she was looking him over. He crooked his arms so that his muscles would ripple.

"Do you live in that house?" he asked.

She nodded. "Yes, with my uncle."

"Just the two of you?"

"Uh-huh."

"Doesn't it get awfully lonesome?"

"Sometimes. We're only here during the summer. We're in Westchester in the winter."

Jerry's eyes swept her figure. It was beautiful. She couldn't have been older than nineteen or twenty. Her body was lithe and youthfully curved. Her bosom was the most mature part of her.

"I—I don't know who I have to thank for pulling me out," Jerry said. "My name is Jerry Riley."

Again she blushed. "I'm Adele Worthington," she murmured.

"I'd like to show my appreciation for what you did, Miss Worthington," Jerry said. "Since you're here all alone I wonder if you would like some company. I work during the week but I can spend Saturday afternoons with you, and Sunday. Of course, there's not much to do out

here but we could swim and play ball and—and talk."

Something happened to her eyes. They moistened. She turned her head away. Jerry's brow wrinkled. He leaned forward, almost touched one of her brown legs.

"I'm sorry if I said anything wrong."

"No," she said softly. "You didn't. But—but I'm afraid I couldn't have you here. You see, my uncle doesn't like me to be with boys. He—he's very strict." Her voice was choked.

Jerry was itching to touch her smooth calf, to run his fingers up along her lush leg, to hold her in his arms and give her some of the attention she craved. With difficulty he held back.

"Maybe he wouldn't mind if I spoke to him," he said hopefully. "I'm really not as bad as I look. I graduated from college and—"

"I'm afraid it wouldn't help. Uncle is set in his ways."

"You mean that you never see anyone?" Jerry questioned incredulously.

"Just—just uncle's friends when they come down. And they're mostly old."

Jerry boiled. "Look, Adele," he blurted. "You don't mind my calling you Adele, do you?"

She smiled. "No, Jerry."

He slid closer to her. "Why couldn't I come over early in the morning? I could swim around the wall like I did today." He stopped short, turned beet red.

Adele's eyes twinkled. "So that's what you did—swam around the wall! And I wore myself out giving you artificial respiration!"

This time Jerry dropped his hand on her knee. A thrill shot up his arm. Her skin was so warm and soft.

"I *had* to meet you, Adele. I saw you from the top of the wall. You were doing exercises and you looked so lovely."

She looked towards the house. She stiffened. "You'd better go, Jerry," she said. "Uncle is out on the porch. He'll be coming down to the beach soon."

Jerry followed the direction of her eyes. He could see a white haired man looking down towards the ocean. "I'll go, Adele," he said, "but I'll be back. I can't wait until next Saturday. I'll be here tomorrow morning at seven—for a few minutes. I won't have much time because I catch the 8:05 to the city." He came close. "Good-bye . . . until then."

Her lips parted. Jerry couldn't resist. He leaned over, kissed their moist, warm softness. Then he ran down the beach into the water.

HIS EYES WERE GLITTERING like diamonds when he rushed into the little three room cottage. His mother was in the tiny kitchen making breakfast.

He threw his arms around her, kissed her silver hair. "I found an angel, Mom! A perfect angel!"

sloping sand. Water dripped from his tapered body.

"Hello," he greeted.

Her eyes smiled. "Hello, Jerry. I—I wasn't sure you'd come. I've been up since six."

She had a terry cloth beach robe on but it was open down the front. He could see the outline of her high, firm breasts and the flat plane of her tummy.

"I told you I'd come. I can't stay long, though." He dug his toes into the sand. "I told my mother about you. She was glad we'd met. You know, maybe if your uncle had a talk with me it might be all right for me to visit you.

"You probably saved my life," Jerry said weakly.



At the breakfast table he told her how he had met Adele, told her about the uncle. "But I'm going to see her anyway, Mom! Early in the morning. She's so beautiful."

Mrs. Riley smiled understandingly. "I'm happy for you, Jerry. Maybe if her uncle met you he'd change his mind about young men."

"I don't care whether he does or doesn't! I'll see her. She says her uncle never lets her out. It's like a prison."

AT SEVEN THE NEXT morning, Jerry swam around the wall. Adele was waiting on the beach. He swam in as fast as he could, ran up the

I've got a good job in a brokerage house and I graduated from college. I even played football and was mentioned for All-American."

She dropped to the sand. "Tell me about it, Jerry."

For ten minutes Jerry talked. Mostly about football. The Navy game and that winning touchdown. Adele's blue eyes glowed.

"And—and they cheered for you, Jerry? Just for you?"

"Yes, but they shouldn't have. The other boys deserved the credit. They gave me perfect interference." He got to his feet. "I'll have to

go now. I'll see you tomorrow morning at the same time."

She rose, breathing deeply. "All right, Jerry."

Neither of them said another word, but somehow they both moved together automatically. Jerry's arms twined about her waist. He kissed her full on the lips; a hard, fervent kiss. He could feel her curves against his chest, the roundness and the warmth of them.

There were stolen minutes every morning that week. Thursday it rained but Jerry braved the elements. On Saturday, just as he was leaving, he slipped his hand under Adele's robe.

"Could I see you tonight, darling?" he whispered. "I could climb the wall instead of swimming around. Nobody would know."

She trembled with desire. It was the first time a man's hand had touched her. Her body thrilled to Jerry's caresses. Her nerves grew taut and shivers ran up and down her spine.

"I—I'm afraid, Jerry," she whispered.

"There's nothing to be afraid of, darling. I'll get here after dark. You wait on the beach. Make it eight o'clock." His fingers slid under the shoulder strap of the suit, touched velvet flesh.

"Yes Jerry!" she gasped. "Yes!"

THERE WAS ONLY the smallest sliver of a silver moon. Jerry climbed over the rock wall, dropped lightly to the sand.

"Adele," he called.

She came out of the darkness, all white and lovely and warm. Jerry swept her into his arms, kissed her parted lips, pressed his mouth to the hollow of her throat.

"I thought I'd never get out, Jerry," she panted. "Uncle was watching me."

"Let's not talk about it, sweet." He eased her down to the still warm sand, stretched out beside her, one arm circling her slender waist, his mouth glued to her warm lips. Slowly, carefully he caressed her, running his hand up and down her body from her shoulder to her knees. It was like playing a rich, mellow violin. She vibrated to his touch. Her fingers toyed with his hair, relaxing when his fingers passed lightly over her curved hip.

Jerry burned for the sweetness of her. He found the opening at the neck of her dress. The first contact with her warm silken flesh drove him wild. Her bosom swelled and grew taut. She clasped her hands behind his head and forced his mouth to hers as though she wanted him to come closer to her.

It was ecstasy so keen that they both melted

under its ravishing flame. Jerry's caresses became tense and demanding.

"I love you!" she panted. "Jerry, I love you!"

He kissed her throat, burrowed his lips into the hollow of her shoulder. His trembling hands pushed her dress down until the sleek upper curves of her charms were magnets for his eyes.

Even the swishing of the waves on the beach was lost to them. They were in a world apart, existing only for each other. They were blissfully unaware that alien presences were coming towards them. Blissfully unaware until Jerry felt a heavy hand on his shoulder, heard a gruff voice break through the diaphanous curtain.

He was jerked to his feet. He saw the flash of brass buttons and a silver star, felt a gun in his ribs, but it was like awakening from a tight sleep. He was dazed.

Adele's voice broke the spell. "You can't do this!" she screamed.

Another voice—a male voice—answered. "Your uncle's orders, Miss Adele."

Jerry looked around. A policeman was holding his arm. Another man—in a butler's uniform—stood by.

"But he hasn't done anything!" Adele cried.

"Trespassin', Miss," the policeman said.

"He wasn't trespassing! I invited him here!"

Jerry spoke up. "No, she didn't! I climbed the wall. Take me to Mr. Worthington."

They walked towards the house. When they neared the porch the policeman started for the side of the house with Jerry in tow.

"Wait a minute!" Jerry gasped. "I want to see Mr. Worthington!"

The gun bored into his ribs. "You'll see the judge instead! Come on!"

"Jerry!" Adele started towards him but the butler barred her way. "Jerry!"

The policeman jerked him out of sight, along the path to the driveway.

THE CAR WAS UNCOMFORTABLE and the cell was cold and damp. Jerry stared at the iron bars, his chin resting in the palms of his hands. An hour had gone by since the lieutenant at the desk had listened to his story, noted the complaint signed by J. W. Worthington, and remanded Jerry to a cell until morning. He had asked them to notify his mother. He wondered whether they had.

Footsteps in the stone corridor brought him out of his blue funk. A policeman opened the barred door.

"You can go now, sonny," he said. "You're free."

Jerry shot to his feet. "You mean it?"

"Yep."

Jerry's heart leaped. At the desk, he heard

The door of the stationhouse flew open. Adele, her honey-colored hair awry, burst into the room.

"Jerry!" she cried, flying into his arms.

There was a chauffeur driven car outside. In a daze, Jerry permitted himself to be bundled



*"You can't do this!"
Adele screamed.*

the lieutenant tell him that the charge of trespassing had been withdrawn.

There was only one thing in Jerry's mind. He *had* to get to Adele's uncle immediately and explain things. He didn't want her to suffer for what had happened.

"How do I get to Mr. Worthington's place from here, lieutenant?" he queried.

The official stared at him. "That's one place you'd better steer clear of, son."

"But I *must* get there," Jerry insisted. "I've got to—"

into it. The moment the door closed Adele embraced him, kissed his eyes, his lips, his cheeks.

"Oh, Jerry, darling," she murmured over and over again.

He held her tight. "Why—why did your uncle withdraw the charge?" he questioned, bewildered.

Adele quivered against him. "Perfect interference," she gurgled. "Remember you told me how it wasn't always the fellow who carried the ball but the fellow who took out the opposition?"

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BOUDOIR BUYER

By

Georgette Gay

KENNETH CALVERT, energetic young General Manager of Black's, Fifth Avenue, New York's swankiest department store, smiled across several acres of desk at Gladys Collinge. "I think I have a splendid idea, Miss Collinge," he was saying. "You can start at once, and I think we can depend upon your society friends patronizing the boudoir shop."

"Thank you so much." Gladys, a chic little figure in her dove gray tailleur, gold ringlets peeping out from under a Rebaux chapeau, leaned over the desk. Involuntarily, Calvert's eyes were drawn to twin bulges, which, though completely hidden by the high neck of her outfit, gave undeniable evidence of the rounded deliciousness that lay beneath.

"If you'll wait a moment," he said hurriedly, "I'll dictate a statement for the press agent, and tomorrow you will see your picture and a nice little story about you in all the big papers." He pressed a button on his desk. A prim looking, begoggled female entered. She also wore a suit, but she was the exact antithesis of the delectable Gladys.

"Miss Meed," said Kenneth briskly, "take this memorandum for the Publicity Department, with instructions to release it for appearance tomorrow." He paused a moment, then dictated, "Headline: 'Society Debutante Joins Fashionable Department Store.' Subhead: 'Gladys Collinge, daughter of social leader, inaugurates new Boudoir Shop at Black's, Fifth Avenue.' That's all. Miss Collinge can give the press department the story in her own words, and be sure that you bring in the fact that the idea is entirely her own, and that her society friends are going to patronize the Boudoir Shop, of which she will be in charge, and for which she will do all the buying. Have Hanley get a close-up. That's all."

"Don't go yet," said Ken, laying a restraining hand on Gladys' wrist. "Miss Meed will be in shortly to take you to the photography department. In the meantime, let me congratulate you once more on your splendid idea and wish you success."

"It's very kind of you, Mr. Calvert."

"Oh, nonsense. Call me Kenneth. I don't stand on ceremony with people I like."

Gladys looked at him quizzically, out of blue eyes, an amused little smile perking up the corner of her Cupid's bow lips. "I like informality myself—and I'll be hurt if you don't call me Gladys."

Calvert came around the desk, drew Gladys to her feet, and looked into her eyes. Sophisticated as she was, it was a new experience to be looked at so ardently. Besides, she wasn't used to associating with big business men, and had heard rather terrifying stories about them. She couldn't help noticing Ken's eyes resting approvingly on the flowing curves of her bodice, and the trim, pliant outlines of her perfectly rounded hips.

"What do you find so interesting about me?" she asked demurely.

"What do I find interesting? It would be easier to say what I don't find interesting. The answer would be nothing. Do you swim?"

"Why?"

"Well, I have just been trying to imagine how you look in a form fitting bathing suit. I imagine an artist would go into raptures."

Gladys blushed, something she didn't ordinarily do. "Really Ken, you take my breath away. Are all big business men such fast workers?"

"We have to be. We're always afraid somebody else will get ahead of us and beat us out of something good."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning—do you happen to be engaged to anyone? No—you aren't wearing any ring anyway. Well, that leaves a clear field for me." He slipped his arms around her, drew her gently against him, tilted up her firm, little chin.

GLADYS WAS TOO amazed to resist. As his lips descended on hers, firmly but caressingly, she was glad she had been taken by surprise. Unconsciously she found her deliciously cherry red lips responding to Ken's pressure. His arm tightened around her, pressing her against him, so that her firmly erect hillocks were crushed against his chest. Trying to adjust her five feet four to Ken's All America tackle height, Gladys found herself lifted completely off the floor.

Well shod feet began to kick. "Put me down," she managed to gasp against his lips. "Someone might come in."

Laughingly Ken released her. "No worry of that. This is a private office, and no one enters here without knocking. That's one of the things about being a big executive."

Flushing rosy, Gladys adjusted her smudged lipstick, stood on tiptoe to erase tell-tale marks from Ken's mouth with a tiny lace handkerchief.

"Thoughtful little sweet. What an adorable little wife you'll make."

"Is this a proposal?"

"It certainly is!"

"You don't waste any time, do you?"

"You heard what I said about somebody else beating me out."

"Well, Mr. Kenneth Calvert, I'll take the mat-

With a mocking glance over her shoulder at Ken, Gladys said "Good-bye, Mr. Calvert," very sweetly, and followed Miss Meed to the Press Department.

GLADYS, CLAD IN a shimmering evening gown, weighted down with sequins, dazzling white hil-



"Did you get me here alone in order to propose?" Gladys breathed.

ter under advisement, and you shall have my report at the earliest possible moment."

"Ouch," said Ken.

"You had it coming, but no hard feelings."

At that moment a discreet rap sounded on the frosted glass door. "Damn," muttered Ken under his breath. "Just as I was getting somewhere. Come in," he called.

Miss Meed stood in the door. "The photographers are ready for Miss Collinge now," she announced.

locks half revealed by a daring design, her back revealed as far as the waist, impatiently lit a cigarette in her Sutton Place apartment. She looked with great disapproval at the slightly inebriated young man in rumpled evening clothes, seated at the opposite end of the room. "Be a dear, Corny, and go home. I've told you a thousand times that I can't go out with you tonight because I have an appointment with someone else."

Cornelius Cobb, familiarly known as Corny, because he managed to keep pretty well corned up, looked at Gladys' resplendent, but somewhat hazy outlines, with resentment. "Remember," he said thickly, "you and I are going to get married."

"Well, if we are," retorted Gladys, "you're doing your best to spoil my appetite. And remem-

ber, also, that this is a modern age, and that your family and my family aren't going to decide who I'm going to marry." She bent, crushing out her cigarette in a silver ashtray, her motion giving Corny a glimpse of deliciously snowy mounds, half revealed. His eager eyes rested upon those treasures, he rose unsteadily on his feet and advanced toward her, trying to take her in his arms. Impatiently Gladys pushed him away. "I told you I have an appointment with someone else. Mr. Calvert, the General Manager of the store, is coming to take me out to dinner."

"Oh, I see," mumbled Corny nastily, "taking advantage of his position to make a play for you, huh?"

"How ridiculous. He is doing nothing of the sort. As a matter of fact," she added maliciously, "he wants to marry me."

"Just what I thought. All these lowbrows want to marry into society. He's only after your connections."

"That's not so," retorted Gladys, a bit doubtful, as the idea took root in her mind. The doorbell cut her short.

A moment later, Yvette, her trim French maid, announced Ken's arrival.

"Ken! I'm so glad to see you."

Ken, not noticing the highly corned Corny, swept Gladys into his arms, kissed her deeply and longingly.

"You're gorgeous," he breathed.

"Shay, what ish thish?" Corny horned in. "Whaddaya mean petting my gal?"

Ken turned angrily, getting a beautiful whiff composed of equal parts of Manhattans, Martinis, Sidecars, Bacardi and twenty-five year old Scotch. "Who is this drunk?" he asked Gladys. "What are you running—an alcoholic ward?"

"That," answered Gladys wearily, "is Cornelius Cobb, the last of the Cobbs, who expects to marry me and perpetuate his name."

"Oh yeah," said Ken. Roughly he seized Corny by the collar. Just as roughly propelled him to the door. On the way out, he picked up Cobb's hat and coat, ejected the reeling Corny into the corridor and flung the hat and coat after him.

"That," he grinned, "is the way we big business men get rid of society lounge lizards who can't hold their liquor."

"Thanks so much," said Gladys. "I was afraid I couldn't get rid of him without calling the police."

"Well, that's that," said Ken. "It's late. Let's be going." They passed the reeling Corny in the hall, took the elevator down, and settled themselves in Ken's luxuriously upholstered roadster.

"I'm taking you to LaRue's tonight," he said, slipping his right arm around Gladys' yielding waist. "After that we're going to the opening of a new hot spot. After that, you're going to promise to marry me."

"One thing at a time, darling," murmured Gladys. "Remember, I've just been through an ordeal."

OVER A CANDLE-LIT table at LaRue's, Ken made sure to speak enthusiastically of Gladys' new boudoir department. In the back of his head was the idea that any extended talk about boudoirs and everything connected with them, might give Gladys the same idea he had.

"Do any men ever come in to the Boudoir Shop?" he asked.

"Well, I haven't seen any so far. Our best customers are prospective brides, young married women, and chorus girls with sugar daddies."

"I imagine that prospective brides must find the Boudoir Department the most interesting in the store."

"I seem to detect another proposal in this," said Gladys. "Can't we just have a good time without getting serious?"

"All right," responded Ken, "let's remember you don't want me to get serious. Maybe you'll be only too glad if I change my mind."

"You don't think much of yourself, do you?"

"I wasn't thinking of myself at all. I was thinking of the things that might happen in this very funny world."

They glided out on the slippery dance floor, Gladys' gleaming gown setting off Ken's correct black and white so startlingly that more than one pair of eyes followed them around the floor, and at least two society reporters hastily scribbled notes, and dashed for telephones.

Holding Gladys more tightly than was necessary, Ken experienced the delight of feeling full, luscious mounds pressed against him, with breath-taking intimacy. He recognized the expensive Parisian perfume that arose from the shadowed valley between them. Looking down, he could detect momentary glimpses of lovely magnolia-like flesh which bounced in and out of his line of vision tantalizingly.

Gliding blissfully in his arms, Gladys knew perfectly well what was taking place. She could see Ken's eyes drop downward, as if drawn by a magnet. She felt his hand, on her back, gradually, almost imperceptibly, slipping lower, until it rested on her uncovered waist.

When the dance ended, and they were back at their table, sipping champagne from wide

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til their blood whipped madly in their veins, until her breath came faster and faster, and she was limp and boneless in his arms. And then after a moment he sat up, released her and with a hand that shook ever so little, he reached for a cigarette.

Ardis, still reclining against the pillows, flushed, wide eyed, obviously startled, stared at him and drew a long breath. "You—work fast, don't you?" she said inanely at last.

"Oh—I wouldn't say that," countered Ken cocking a quizzical eyebrow at her and barely concealing a faint smile. "I've known you two hours, you know!"

Ardis put up a shaken hand to her hair and stammered, trying hard to be gaily casual about it all, "Your—technique is practically perfect. I suppose when you kiss 'em—they stay kissed!"

Ken grinned at her—but there was a blazing fire in his eyes that was beyond the reach of that grin. "You ought to know!" he answered lightly.

Deliberately, she put up her arms and drew him down to her again. His arm held her scarcely tighter than her own held him. Her mouth stirred beneath his own, the petal-soft faintly fragrant lips parted. One frail shoulder strap of her dress snapped beneath the strain and the dainty loveliness of a rosy pink shoulder was bared, stirring to new, exquisite life as though the fires of love had warmed it. The man caught his breath on a little gasp of sheer delight and cradled her closer to him.

"Wait a minute," she said breathlessly and wriggled her shoulder free of the other strap so that now his eyes were thrilled and enchanted by the loveliness of more gleaming flesh that quivered at his touch and was his for the taking. They were shaken with the delight of that moment. The unutterable perfection of them. Ardis looked up at him, her face as white as his shirt front, her dark eyes slumbrous pools of passion.

"I—never felt—this way before—I'm afraid it's love," she told him unsteadily and gave him her mouth for his kiss.

The wrecked silver frock was an obstruction to his exploring, caressing hands and shaken, he whispered, his mouth against her own, "Doesn't this—come off? I mean—it's detachable isn't it?"

Ardis caught a tiny smothered laugh of passionate abandon, and said shaken,

"Wait a minute!"

SHE GOT TO HER feet, bent swiftly to kiss him, and then she hurried out of the room. In her own room, she kicked off the wrecked gown, fumbled in the closet for a negligee that had

caught her eye in a downtown shop and that she had never expected to wear. It was a sheer thing of scarlet chiffon, collared in scarlet and gold brocade. Through it, the white beauty of her limbs and her lovely body gleamed as through a scarlet mist. She caught up a tall crystal stoppered bottle of exquisite scent, touched the stopper with its precious drop of fragrance to the lobe of each pink ear and then—with a little breathless, radiant smile, to the deep, sweet white valley that lay between her breasts.

She went swiftly back to the door that led into the living room. But as she reached that door, she paused, wide eyed and startled at what she saw. Ken was standing in front of the mirror above the console table. He had torn his collar and tie loose. He had thrown off the coat to his well tailored evening attire; and as she watched he deliberately drew the nails of one hand sharply down his cheek and she saw the tiny red lines that followed that gesture; and then he doubled his fist, held it as far from him as he could—and struck himself brutally in the eye. She heard his little involuntary "ouch"! and then he leaned forward critically to study the damaged eye in the mirror.

Ardis came into the room, staring at him in wide eyed amazement.

"What on earth are you doing?" she demanded.

He turned to her and said grimly, "Call a cop and have me thrown out!"

Ardis drew back a step, convinced that suddenly he had lost his mind.

"Go on—do as I say! Have me thrown out! And get back into that dress you were wearing—hurry! You haven't much time to lose!"

"Have you gone completely crazy?" demanded Ardis uneasily and stood erect, for the moment forgetful of the revealing quality of the sheer negligee she wore.

Ken caught her by the shoulders, and as though he did it against his will, he bent his head, kissed her passionately and then pushed her towards her own room. "Go back in there—and put on that dress—and hurry!"

There was a faint sound in the hall. A key being fitted into a lock. Ken opened the door behind Ardis and pushed her into her room. "Get into that dress—and make it snappy!" he ordered sharply, closing the door upon her.

Listening, still and rigid, making no move to obey him, Ardis heard someone come into the living room and heard Ken say drily, "I don't need to tell you that it didn't work—take a look at this map of mine!"

And then a man's voice said eagerly, "So she

socked you one, did she? Good for Ardis! Then I've been wrong about her all along!"

Ken said savagely, "I'll say you have!"

ARDIS OPENED THE door, still in the revealing red chiffon negligee and came face to face with Duncan Lowrie, her fiance. "I suppose you can explain all this?" she suggested icily. "Though I really don't believe I need an explanation. You sent him here to see if I'd—fall for him? You wanted to be sure that I was—a good girl before you married me? That was it, wasn't it?"

"Oh, now, have a heart, Ardis," protested the slightly tubby young man who bulged out of his evening clothes in the wrong direction. "After all, I owe it to my family—to my children, in fact—to be sure that the woman I marry is—worthy of the name she will bear!"

Ardis stared at him for a long moment, and then she turned and looked at Ken, studying him quietly. Ken met her eyes straightly and she saw that the damaged eye was swelling rapidly.

"Does it hurt, darling?" she murmured sweetly and touched the eye with a gentle finger tip.

Ken looked swiftly at Duncan and said lightly, "Not half as bad as I deserve—you swing a mean right, Ardis—but I had it coming to me!"

Ardis nodded and said quietly, "Yes, I think you did—only, of course, I'd never have struck you, no matter how much I might feel you deserved it."

She turned to Duncan and tugged at the beautiful solitaire on her slender third finger. "Here you are, Duncan—because, you see, Ken is trying to deceive you. I did fall for him—hard! He gave himself that black eye in order to convince you that I was an innocent girl."

Ken said savagely, "I'll break the nose of any one who says you're not!"

Duncan looked from one to the other and his plump face was touched with a bewildered frown. "Here, what is all this? Ken, you were supposed to find out—that is, well—what I want to know is—did she—did you—"

"The answer is 'yes'—he did and I let him!" snapped Ardis sharply. "I'm crazy about him! And I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man in the world. And if you don't get out of here and make it snappy—I'll give you an eye that will match his!"

Duncan retreated a step but tried to bluff. "You can't talk to me like this—you're nothing but a cheap little actress—"

And then Ken swung on him. Duncan went down, struggled to his feet, squealed as Ken took another step toward him and went out of the

room, mumbling what he would do to them both. When the door closed behind him, Ken drew a long breath, turned and picked up his coat.

ARDIS SAT DOWN on the divan, reached for a cigarette, lit it and surveyed Ken coldly.

"So it was all a 'frame-up'," she said coldly. "And I was fool enough to think you were on the level! It serves me right!"

Ken looked down at her soberly. "I don't suppose it would do any good if I told you—I was sorry?" he offered without much hope.

"It wouldn't! Not in the least!" answered Ardis sternly.

She looked up at him curiously, her eyes cold, yet concealing a bitter hurt. "Funny—you don't look like the type of man who'd do—a foul trick like that—not even for a pal!"

"Duncan had me more or less on a spot," answered Ken frankly. "He held an I.O.U. of mine. I couldn't pay it—he threatened to see that I lost my job—I work in his father's office you know—and—well, he said that if I'd—do a job for him, he'd—tear up the I.O.U's."

Ardis nodded, and flicked the ashes from her cigarette. "Sounds like Duncan," she agreed without too much relenting. "But—at the last moment, you weakened. For two cents, you'd have spoiled the whole thing—that eye looks like the devil! Hurts, too, I suppose."

"That was because—all of a sudden, I realized you were—a swell girl and I couldn't go through with it!" answered Ken, unhappily, his eyes fastened upon the warm, jutting promontories that thrust themselves against the sheer chiffon of her garment.

"But of course you know now that Duncan won't tear up your I.O.U's—you're right back where you started!" Ardis reminded him gently.

"I don't care—I'll lose the damn' job and go back home and work for my Dad in the service station—it's not a bad little town—I'll have a darned sight more than I've had here!" answered Ken doggedly.

Ardis said quietly, "Ken—why did you—flop on this job?"

"Because suddenly I realized I was—in love with you!" said Ken simply.

Ardis caught her breath and leaned forward. The red chiffon parted above perfect dimpled knees and revealed the milk-white softness of the flesh above. The scarlet and gold brocaded collar slid down so that dimpled shoulders and more than a suggestion of swelling curves was revealed.

"Ken—do you mean that? Then—the whole

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MIND Over Motor

By Gregory Hawthorne

A POOR thing but mine own." From the center of the road, Bill Ferries surveyed the skeleton of paintless boards which housed the Dunstable Auto Repair Shop. There was a hand-cranked gas pump, an asthmatic tire inflator and a repair pit on the outside. Inside, was a bench with tools and very little else. But Bill owned the lot.

He was still gazing at the layout rather proudly, when there was the imperious sound of a motor horn behind him, and a smart little roadster roared past and came to a stop alongside the gasoline pump. Bill hurried up.

An extremely pretty girl sat, smiling, at the wheel. She was dressed in a tight, one piece bathing suit and slippers. Her dark hair, thick and wavy, glistened in the sunlight, and her tanned,

"You'll have to leave me alone," he said huskily.

almost naked body was firm, young and healthy. Her black eyes were sparkling, and her red lips were parted over a set of gleaming, white teeth.

"Bill," she cried, "I've got marvelous news for you."

Bill put his foot on the running board of the roadster and looked at her. He did not speak; being more than contented with the outline of her high, large bosom and the sight of her firm, brown thighs. The tight fitting swimming suit fitted like a glove. The girl smiled more broadly. Her head on one side, she said,

"Don't you want to hear the good news, Bill?"

Bill said, "The mere fact that you're here, Sally, is good enough news for me. Hop out of that crate and let's go out to the back."

"What for?"

"What does a gent usually do when he invites a girl to come in out of the rain?"

Sally flipped open the door of the car and stepped lightly to the ground. It was early, and the narrow, winding street was empty. Not that it would have made any difference had the place been jammed with people. Sally was frankly that way about Bill and she didn't care who knew it. She walked ahead of Bill and he noticed with a gleaming eye the sway of her full hips and the bobbing up and down of her scarcely covered charms.

It was gloomy inside the garage and it smelled of gasoline and oil. Nevertheless, Bill swept Sally impatiently into his arms and strained her to him. She placed her bare, round arms about his neck and her lips were jammed to his. They stood there. Close together, tense and trembling.

Bill ran his hands over her warm, bare back, Sally dropped her head to his chest and he could smell the perfume of her almost black hair. Bill's hands strayed a little lower and Sally squirmed in his arms. Then she broke from him and backed away. Her eyes were shining and her lips were parted over her white, even teeth. A little breathlessly, she said,

"Enough, Bill . . . enough. Otherwise I won't be able to tell you the news."

Bill forced her into a corner and came towards her again. His heart was beating wildly, and the hands that sought her were shaking.

"Come here," he said softly.

Sally covered her bosom with her hands. Bill could see curves filling out the swimming suit, and the sight fanned the flame of his passion. He was breathing heavily when his hands again dropped to the round, naked shoulders. He jerked Sally towards him and held her close. Sally went limp in his arms, and she only sighed when he

forced her onto a row of old automobile seats which made a very nice couch. She shuddered and she whispered, "Darling!" as Bill reached for the straps of the swimming suit and pulled them down over her shoulders.

She swayed towards him and . . .

IT WAS QUITE some time later when Sally finally delivered the piece of news which was the reason for her early morning visit. Sitting side by side on the row of automobile seats, she said, "Bill *mon ange*, Ryder Beech is drunk."

Bill glared at her. "So what?"

"Think, toots . . . use the bean."

"All I know is that Ryder Beech is drunk. I don't see anything to get steamed up about, so help me, I don't."

Sally leaned towards him and slipped her arm through his. "Then," she said, "it's up to me to explain to you. I suppose you remember that today is the day of the race?"

"Oh, yes, sure, I was hoping to be able to do a little business. Being on the track, so to speak. Good corner this. Ought to have some swell crashes here."

Sally raised a small hand. "Let me tell it, Bill," she said. "As you know, Dad's determined that he's going to get the contract for the two thousand cars needed by the Government. So that there can be no question of favoritism, a road race is being staged today for stock model cars, the winner to get the contract. The drivers must be amateurs. Ryder was going to drive Dad's entry. Ryder's drunk."

"How d'you know he's drunk? And why should he be drunk at this hour of the morning?"

"I'll tell you. I don't suppose it's news to you that Ryder's rather keen on me. Well, last night I led Ryder to believe that if he got little me sufficiently tight, I might possibly well, you know. What we just did. Okay. Ryder started out to get little me tight. All he succeeded in doing was get thoroughly plastered himself. I left him at seven this morning snoring on the beach in a drunken stupor. He couldn't drive a nail this morning."

"I still don't get it," Bill said stupidly.

"You drive the car for Dad. You win, and as a reward he agrees to our marriage and he backs the gadget you say will decrease the consumption of gasoline in a car."

Bill laughed. "Me? Me drive for your Old Man. Good grief, if he saw me anywhere near the pit, he'd have me arrested. And don't forget I happened to be your father's chauffeur and I



have a chauffeur's ticket. That makes me a professional driver."

Sally's face dropped. "Good heavens," she said, "I forgot that." Then she brightened up. "Maybe, you won't have to show your license. And they certainly won't recognize you in goggles and crash helmet."

Bill commenced to pace up and down the oily floor. "Honey," he said, "thanks a lot for trying to put it off but it won't work. No good luck ever came to me. I graduated from college as an engineer, and had to take a job as a chauffeur. I worked for the biggest car manufacturer in the business and couldn't even sell him on the idea of my gadget. No use, sweet."

Sally got to her feet and corralled Bill in a corner. She pressed her soft, young body against him and her arms stole round his neck.

"Isn't it worth trying?" she asked, and there was that look again in her eye. Don't you want to make an honest woman out of me? Even if Dad won't back you after the race, you'll win enough in prize money to go into business for yourself and then you can marry me."

BILL HESITATED. SALLY came even closer. She pressed her lightly covered bosom against him. Bill's arms went about her and he strained her



She slipped her long slender legs into the overalls and pulled them up.

close to him. Again he could smell the perfume of her hair and again her lips sought and found his. He was weakening.

"I love you," he said.

"Then take a chance and make me an honest woman."

"All right. I will. See you at the pits this afternoon."

Sally squealed and tightened her grip on him. She pressed her lips against his and Bill could scarcely conceal his delight. He broke away from her.

"You'll have to leave me alone," he said huskily. "I've got to have a steady nerve this afternoon, and you don't help. Run along now, and tell your father that you've found a man but don't tell him who that man is."

Sally turned and Bill slapped her playfully. She turned round and stopped.

"Do some more," she commanded.

"No," Bill said firmly. He pushed her out of the repair shop and into her car. She waved gaily as she turned the vicious corner and disappeared from sight.

SALLY FOUND HER father on the terrace of the enormous house which overlooked the sea. He was in a towering rage and pacing about like a caged lion. Clouds of smoke belched from the frayed cigar between his lips. In a chair, slumped the white, wan and trembling figure of Ryder Beech.

At the sight of Sally, Roscoe North turned and pointed a quivering finger at Ryder. "Look at that young swine," he bellowed. "Look at the state he's in and he expects to drive one of my cars."

Sally walked up to her father and slipped a bare arm through his. Ryder glared at her with misty eyes but he did not speak. Softly, Sally said,

"Stop worrying, Daddy. I knew all about it long before you did. I was with Ryder last night and I begged him not to get drunk. When I left him I knew he'd be in no condition to drive, so I went out early this morning and got another man for you."

"Who?" roared North. "Not that young fool of a chauffeur I fired for getting fresh with you?"

Sally couldn't bring herself to tell a deliberate lie. So she said, "Don't be silly. You don't know this chap," she couldn't lie, "but he's a swell driver and he'll cop the race for you."

Roscoe North seemed a bit mollified and plied Sally with questions. But she absolutely refused to tell him whom she had got to drive the car and he

finally had to be satisfied with things as they were. Still grumbling and looking bayonets at Ryder, he sat down to breakfast and explained the reason for the enormous bay window which he stowed under the table.

Sally, still in the daring bathing suit, which was obviously giving Ryder some pretty keen ideas, sat down also and ate a hearty meal.

BILL AND SALLY sat in the back of the car pit. Only they and the mechanics were there. Old North had been forbidden by Sally to come anywhere near the car and he was somewhere near the finish line.

Sally was dressed in a summer chiffon dress and it showed to advantage the curve of her lush hips and the firm charms under her bodice. He was dressed in overalls and a crash helmet and goggles lay on the bench at his side. In front of them, gleaming in the strong sunlight stood the advanced type of stock coupe which was to be used in the race. The mechanic was going over it for the last time.

"Nervous?" Sally slipped her arm through Bill's.

"Only when you do that to me. I wish you'd worn something under that dress, Sally. It really isn't fair. I've got to keep my mind on the race, y'know."

"I am wearing something under it. Look." Deliberately, she pulled up the full skirt and Bill caught a glimpse of the hem of lacy panties. Her legs were bare and the sight of her exposed leg excited him.

"Did you drive over the course?" she asked.

Bill nodded. "Yeah. It doesn't worry me. Only that curve down by my place. That's going to be a bad one. Got to slow right down. The rest of it's a snap. Don't want to go through my joint."

"Is your place insured?" Sally wanted to know.

"Sure. Why?"

"Might be an idea," Sally said thoughtfully. "I mean going through that place of yours. It might start you in a real business with the insurance money."

Bill grinned. "Yeah. Also it might come in handy to pay the funeral expenses. What did your Old Man say when you told him you'd got a driver?"

"Naturally, he wanted to know who it was. Naturally, I wouldn't tell him."

A figure appeared in the doorway. It was one of the officials demanding to see Bill's license. Bill handed it over. The official glanced at it. Then he handed it back.

"No good," he said. "You're a professional chauffeur. Only amateurs in this race, fellow."

Bill started to expostulate and Sally joined in. The official raised his hand. "Argument isn't going to get you anywhere. You'll have to get another driver or retire the car from the race."

you're used to. It has all kinds of extra gadgets and you don't know how to drive it."

Sally broke away from him and unhooked the hooks at her waist.

"I've been driving since I was fifteen," she said.



"How long've we got?" Bill demanded.

"Bout fifteen minutes," the official said. Then he started again for the entrance. He turned. "I'll come back just before the race."

They were alone. Sally got to her feet and pulled off her large picture hat. Bill gazed at her in amazement. "What d'you think you're doing?" he demanded.

"I'm going to drive the car," Sally said calmly.

Bill jumped for her and pinned her arms to her sides. "You're not going to do anything of the sort," he said angrily. "This isn't the model

"I simply couldn't stop the darned thing," she explained.

"But this is something different. You don't understand this car. It's revolutionary, I tell you."

"Don't be an ass, Bill. Hand me those overalls on that nail."

BILL ARGUED AND fumed but it did no good and he was forced to give her the overalls. Sally glanced quickly about her. Then, she reached for the hem of the chiffon dress and pulled it over

her gleaming head. As Bill had suspected, she was wearing a tiny brassiere and he caught his breath at the sight of her near nudity. Her panties were so abbreviated, she might just as well have worn nothing at all, and for the moment, Bill forgot all about the race and almost everything else. He walked boldly up to Sally and put his arms about her. She turned to him and there was a brilliant smile on her face.

Then she kissed him and reached for the overalls. She slipped her long, slender legs into them and pulled them up over her shoulders. With a pang of regret, Bill saw the disappearing of her cute curves. Sally pulled the zipper, and she was hidden from view. Then she stuffed her black curls into the crash helmet and adjusted the goggles.

"How do I look?" she demanded.

"Gosh," Bill said, "I wish you wouldn't do it."

Sally laughed at him, showing her white teeth. "It doesn't mean a thing," she said airily. "Don't forget I know the course like the palm of my own hand, and . . ."

"You don't know the car."

"Then take me out to it and show me the new gadgets and how they work."

Bill was laboriously explaining the various knobs and levers, when the official again arrived on the scene and demanded licenses. Sally handed hers over and he looked at it in surprise.

"The daughter of the owner himself, eh?" he said. "The Old Man know about it?"

"Of course," said the girl who could not tell a deliberate lie. "You don't think I'd do anything without Dad's permission, do you?"

The official did whatever he had to do and then told Sally to drive to the starting place. Sally leaned out of the side and smiled into Bill's drawn face.

"Don't be nervous, honey," she said. "Everything's going to be all right."

Bill did not speak. Sally pulled down the goggles and adjusted the crash helmet. Then she did things to the gadgets and the bright little car shot forward. Bill watched her as she drove to the start. Obviously, she did not understand the knobs and levers, and it was with a heavy heart that he repaired to his garage on the corner.

Bill watched the progress of the race with his heart in his mouth. Time after time the line of cars flashed past.

Sally was well out in front most of the way and she drove like a fiend. In spite of the terrors of that curve, she always managed to wave and Bill waved feebly back.

Lap after lap he counted. Then there were three

cars left. Sally was well out in front in the last lap and Bill knew that she had won. With unspeakable relief, he waved to her as she took the fiendish bend for the last time and straightened out for the roaring run home. Bill turned away and stumbled inside the repair shop. He sank weakly onto the row of automobile cushions and dropped his head to his hands. He felt ten times worse than if he had driven the race himself.

His head snapped up. He heard the roar of an approaching motor. He jumped to his feet and rushed to the door. Sally was bearing down on the corner again. What for? The race was over!

She approached with the speed of a comet. Bill heard the scream of her brakes. Saw Sally frantically spinning the wheel. Saw the little car try to answer the touch of those slim hands. It hesitated, swerved, and Bill jumped aside just in time to allow the hurtling car to flash past him.

THERE WAS A DEAFENING roar as it plunged into the wooden side of his workshop. Another crash and then silence. Sick, Bill rushed inside. From under a pile of broken timbers and dented roof came a calm voice.

"Well, I finally managed to stop you, you . . ."

Bill heaved the debris aside and pulled Sally out. She was fresh and smiling. There was a big dent in the crash helmet.

"Are you all right?" he cried.

"Of course I am. Bill . . . I wasn't listening when you were telling me about the new gadgets. I simply couldn't stop the damned thing."

"You fathead . . . you nut . . . you . . . you . . ."

Bill held her close to him, and she could feel the wild hammering of his heart. She smoothed his hair and ran her hand across his wet forehead. Softly, she said,

"There's nothing the matter with me, and we've won, honey. What with the prize money and the insurance, we can make our own terms with Dad."

"Darling," he said and he jammed her to him.

Sally broke away from him. "They'll all be here before you can turn round. I hate these damned overalls. Let's go out the back way to the beach. Bring those automobile cushions with you. I have a sort of sentimental attachment for them."

Bill hugged her close, and as a sort of spur, Sally pressed closer to Bill.

"What a woman you are," he said. "Haven't you ever heard of the word 'satisfied'?"

"Certainly. I'll let you know when the time comes to use it."

They picked up the automobile cushions and started for the back door.

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DOWN THE FIRE-ESCAPE

By Atwater Culpepper

COULD I come in—just for a minute? So that I could go down your fire-escape?”

Billy Nason ran a hand through his tousled curls. Girls like the one who stood hesitantly in the doorway of his apartment don't usually clamber down fire-escapes at ten-thirty in the morning—not the cool eyed miss of this type.

The two were staring appraisingly at each other. The girl's face wore amused tolerance at Bill's dishevelled getup. As for him—well, when girls stand in the doorway, silhouetted against the light—well, there was some figure suggested under that dress, outlined—Bill wondered if she had a slip on under that close fitting blue gown. And he could almost make out the pattern of her stepins—looked like dots of lace—he wondered if she knew just how much of a tantalizing figure she made in that doorway.

“Well?” A note of impatience had crept into her voice.

Bill clutched his bathrobe about him. He was acutely conscious of his bare feet in scuffed slippers, his untidy hair, his rumpled pajamas. Fifteen little devils were beating with hammers in an irregular rhythm at the back of his head.

“Sure you want to come in?” he inquired incredulously. “Haven't you made a mistake in the number? You just got me out of a sound sleep—and I don't want any vacuum cleaners nor floor brushes. You don't look the type to sell magazines to pay your way through business college, and you aren't carrying any samples of Fry-O, the delicious vegetable shortening—”

Her laugh was alluringly disarming. “Oh, you're delicious yourself, Mr. Nason! I'm sorry I got you out of bed—but I simply had to get in here. Your rooms open upon the fire-escape, don't they? And I simply have to go down it.”

“You?” His tone was frankly incredulous. “What's this about the fire-escape?”

Steps were sounding on the stairs. Coming nearer. The girl slid by him, and closed the door behind her. “Don't mind, do you? Only if somebody saw me coming in—well, it might make talk. No, I never sold magazines nor demonstrated shortening in my life.”

“I can well believe that,” he agreed, with a grin.

“You see, my aunt has an apartment directly

under this one—Mrs. Lancaster Steele—I'm Helen Steele—her niece.” She waited expectantly.

“Uh-huh.” This began to make a little more sense.

She led him to the window, and pointed out. Four flights below, in the little side street upon which one wall of the Clarendon gave, a limousine whose size and glittering appointments bespoke opulence, cruised slowly. The chauffeur in his whipcord uniform peered upward from the car window. The girl kicked her hand toward the luxurious car, then turned to Billy.

“Maybe you see—or perhaps you don't. My aunt and I were shopping—at Jardine's. We were returning two dresses—not quite what we wanted. Aunt Laura left the sales slips back in the apartment. And the salespeople were inclined to be snippy—wouldn't consider making the return without the slips. Of course Aunt Laura has an account there—but she got a little indignant—and she sent Rogers and the car back with me to get the slips.”

His eyes ran approvingly over her slim figure, the taut, uplifted breasts under the closely fitting silk, the svelte lines. He nodded.

“Only I was stupid enough, when I got here, to find I'd left my own handbag back in the store with aunt—my handbag with the keys to the apartment. I didn't want to make another trip back to the store, just for that. And I remembered that before we left, Aunt Laura had left the window unlocked. So I thought, if you didn't mind, I'd just go through your room, down the fire-escape, in the window, and get the slips—and everything would be all right. You see, don't you?”

Billy did see. He couldn't vision this svelte, exquisitely dressed girl, climbing down fire-escapes.

BILL'S HEAD WAS BEGINNING to clear up now. A session that had lasted till four in the morning, in a certain smoke filled room, with sundry glasses and irritating bits of pasteboard that had a succession of small spots instead of the pretty pictures they ought to have, had fogged his tired brain. He wondered how, for a moment even, now that she turned the battery of her great dark eyes upon him, that he had been so churlish

as to hesitate for a minute. But—he looked over her slim figure discouragingly.

"You can't climb down that fire-escape like that. You'd ruin that dress and your stockings, crawling out the window, climbing over that sill—"

"What would you suggest?" Mischief lurked in her eyes.

"Why—er—" A brilliant idea flamed through the fog in his brain. "Why don't I climb down there for you? Let you in—"

Her laugh was rippling silver. "But you're not exactly dressed for it, are you?" Her mocking eyes ran over his costume. "What would people think, if they saw you clambering down the fire-escape in your pajamas?"

Bill himself laughed a little uproariously. "That *would* look sort of whacky. Suppose you sit down and wait a minute, Miss Steele, while I slide in there and get some clothes on. Then I'll do your errand."

A shade of relief came over the girl's face. "Oh, I couldn't think of imposing on you like that. It would take too long, for one thing. Rogers is waiting for me down below, and my aunt will get impatient. No—" She lifted her skirts alluringly about her knees, and stepped toward the window.

She had stepped on a chair. Bill caught at the rounded knee. "Don't be silly. It won't take me more than a few minutes to get some duds on."

But she was looking with vexation, heedless of him. A frown of annoyance clouded her piquant face. Something pink and lacy was slithering about her knees, cascading down toward her ankles. She caught at the wispy trifle, tried to stuff it up under her skirt, reddened hotly as she became aware of his amused chuckle.

"You wouldn't think it so funny, if it happened to you! I was trying on gowns, there at Jardine's—something must have happened. Would you mind letting me go in there—" she pointed at his bedroom—"and repair the damages?"

Bill Nason's eyes opened. With chagrin he thought of the mussed condition of his sleeping room, the tumbled bed, clothes flung over chairbacks, everything scattered over the place in riotous confusion. He had been gloriously cock-eyed when he went to bed the night before.

There was a flare of cool scorn in her eyes. "Don't be too modest, Mr. Nason. Of course if you're Victorian enough to object to my going into your bedroom—or if you're afraid I'll take something—"

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BILL'S HANDS WERE flung wide in a deprecating gesture. "Oh, make yourself at home. If you can stand the muss, I can. Only I wasn't expecting company so early in the morning. If I'd known you were coming, I'd have tidied up things."

Bill dropped into a rocker as the girl disappeared into his bedroom and closed the door. His head wasn't aching quite so much now—this was one of the adventures you dream of sometimes, read about, but never have happen to you in actual life. She was mighty pretty—and she had good taste in things—at least so far as he had been privileged to see. Too darned bad she had to climb down that fire-escape.

He could hear her moving about in the adjoining room. Then the door opened, and a dark head peered out.

"Where do you keep your safety-pins? It's worse than I expected. Er—button's dropped off somewhere. No wonder the things wouldn't stay up."

Bill, his heartbeat like a motor whose piston-rings are cracked, scuffed into the bedroom. "Now I had some safety-pins somewhere," he argued. He fumbled in futile fashion about the dressing-table.

"Ought to be under those ties." He shoved back a scuffed billfold, opened a little box that held a mixture of studs, buttons and other trivialities. "Nary a safety-pin. Would a straight one do?"

She accepted it dubiously. "That might hold things till I could get down stairs and into my aunt's apartment." She was holding her skirt high about her knees, fumbling up under its inadequate concealment. At last she dropped it.

"I don't seem to be able to make a go of it," she sighed. "This skirt is so tight—do you mind helping? If I hold this skirt up, maybe you can reach up and pin that."

Did he mind helping? Bill Nason's ordinarily adequate fingers quivered with nervousness. He was vouchsafed an alluring vision of silken-sheathed legs, rounded and symmetrical, a ring of white flesh above the garter stripe, tiny bits of frilly elastic. He reached up under the hem of the skirt, his hands fumbling awkwardly, with a delicious tremor. He poked around with the pin, inadequately—

"Ouch." The girl's laugh was mingled with pained annoyance. "You jabbed me that time! We can't get it that way. I guess you'll have to go out, while I take this dress off."

"Do I have to go out?" Bill demanded audaciously.

"Don't you think you ought to?" There was mischief in her dark eyes, as she whisked the hem of her skirt upwards, flicked at the neck-fastening of the gown, and whipped the dress over her shoulders. For a moment she stood tantalizingly in an inadequate little rig of pink—a wispy bank of silk and net about her glorious breasts, the treacherous little fragment of lace and silk about her rounded hips, her only other garment a sheath-like and brief contraption of satin and elastic with a tiny golden zipper.

Billy Nason found words at last. "You're—glorious!"

"Thanks, so much." She had rescued the descending garment, was trying to hold it up, while she strove to pin the treacherous yoke with the short abominations that came in Bill's laundry. They didn't work. She shook her dark mane, and looked up at him with annoyed futility in her glorious eyes.

"I guess I'll have to accept your offer to go down that fire-escape after all," she sighed. She sat down on the edge of the chaise longue, holding the treacherous panties about her.

Bill's eyes devoured hungrily her lithe figure, the firm white throat, the rounded half melons that rose, provocative and desirable, from the tiny net brassiere, the white circle of her smooth tummy between the brassiere and the satin top of the tiny pink girdle. Her eyes fell, then met his bravely.

"You—you shouldn't look so darned lovely!" he groaned.

She met his glance with a mischievous challenge. "Then you do—like my looks?"

Bill Nason plumped down beside her. "Like you?" he muttered hoarsely. "*Like* you?" His arm had gone around the soft ring of flesh about her waist.

She suffered him to draw her close for a moment—the dark mane dropped on his shoulder. "You're pretty nice yourself," she conceded. "But—we're wasting a lot of time—"

Bill tilted the piquant face up to his. "What's time?" he argued. "Moments like this don't come every day." His lips, quivering, avid, hovered over hers.

One of her tiny pumps clattered to the floor. His lips met hers, found them warm, sweet, utterly desirable. Her lips parted slightly. With a sigh, she relaxed in his arms, her soft, warm body close against his. "You *are* sweet," she murmured.

Bill unhooked her stockings as the other pump dropped to the floor. A white arm stole around his neck. She had forgotten she was in a hurry—

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had forgotten everything except that she was held tightly in his arms. . . .

SHE WRITHED OUT of his embrace at last. "Heavens, Aunt Laura will be furious! Why, we've—do you realize how long we've been here? If I don't get in the apartment—get those sales slips—"

"But you don't take account of time when you're in Paardise!" he argued, sitting up, dizzy, exulting, delirious with happiness. "I could keep you here forever."

"Like this?" She shivered slightly. "Without scarcely a thing on? Maybe you've forgotten that I've got to go down that fire-escape—"

"You stay right there," he commanded masterfully. "I'll climb down that fire-escape for you." He gathered up his clothing, and slipped out into the adjoining room.

Dressed at last, he slid up the window sash and climbed out upon the fire-escape. He hoped that nobody would happen to come around that side street, gaze upward at the figure that was clambering down the iron rungs.

(To be concluded)

"Love's Double-Cross"

(Continued from page 50)

thing wasn't just—a put-up job? You—weren't just—earning the I. O. U.'s—when you—when you—" she blushed and stopped.

Ken looked down at her. And suddenly he was beside her, his arms about her, holding her close and hard against him, his mouth bruising her own with his kisses. And now there was no obstruction against his exploring, caressing fingers that knew every inch of her loveliness and thrilled to an ecstatic delight at the knowledge.

Suddenly, he raised his head a little and looked down at her.

"Ardis—will you marry me—and live in a small town with me—and let me love you all the rest of my life?" he pleaded.

"Of course, darling—I adore small towns—Ken, I'm mad about you," she whispered passionately, her mouth a scarlet flower beneath his own, stirring sweetly.

She smiled up at him and drawled sweetly, "So many interruptions! Let's see now—where *were* we?"

And Ken, his blood riotous with delight, his hands shaken a little as they caressed and entertained and claimed her for his own, showed her explicitly and most satisfactorily.

Perfect Interference

(Continued from page 37)

"But—but I don't understand!"

"You will, darling. Just wait."

At the Worthington mansion, Adele led Jerry through the solarium. "Be very quiet," she whispered, drawing him to the door that led to the sea porch. She opened it slowly. "Look."

Jerry peered out. There, on a hammock, were Mr. Worthington and *his mother!* He heard his mother's voice, soft and low. She was telling Adele's uncle about her youth in Ireland!

Adele drew him back, closed the door. "Now do you understand, darling?" she whispered. "Your mother came here as soon as she learned you were arrested. They've been together ever since. Uncle liked her."

Jerry embraced her in the dark. "And I love you," he said. "That makes everything perfect and the game is won!"

Their lips and their bodies met in youthful passion.

"Autumn's Knights"

(Continued from page 31)

start farther back than the night I ran away from you."

"Andre, I'm broke . . ." wailed Carole.

"Go back down south to your house. At least you have that," said Andre Chain, and went back to his car.

Carole stood still, her face ghastly. "I don't dare; it's haunted . . ."

"No good ghost would ever stay in the same house with you, Carole," Dolf said coldly, and took three more steps and swept Kindy off her feet. "It's been a million years since *that* night, and I had to be drunk," he growled, kissing Kindy until the garden reeled around her. "And now I have to meet your mother and get a justice of the peace and . . ."

"Mother is taking a nap . . . this is Virginia, Dolf," murmured Kindy. "I should be doing the same thing . . ."

"Is it something you can share with me?" demanded Dolf, ripping the one remaining button from Kindy's pullover to kiss a spot on her shoulder.

"There's a swing in the grape arbor where I always take my nap," Kindy said, nodding toward the tangled arbor.

Dolf swooped Kindy up and almost ran with her to the shade of the arbor which was covered

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on all but one side by heavy grapevines. A deep cushioned swing was there.

"How long is a nap?" Dolf asked, as he settled there with Kindy in his arms. "Three hours?"

"Greedy," gasped Kindy. "Sometimes . . ."

He drew her down deeper among the cushions and took off the hampering pullover. There were her slacks but they were torn and his hand was cool against her flesh, and caressing, and then breathtaking.

"You'll sing and then you'll sit close to me in a gown that shows all this lovely back, and has engaging slits up the skirt . . . they're stylish now . . . and if I want to put my hand on my wife to see if she's warm enough I can . . . then we'll go home to my penthouse and there won't be twelve boys tagging along, there'll just be us. I used to sleep all day to make up for working all night, but you'll change all that," planned Dolf, with gestures, that brought the nap down again even if they just had time to find Kindy's mother and go to town to get married.

Specialty—Nudes!

(Continued from page 8)

"I suddenly thought of you," John said simply.

"You mean that?"

"I mean that."

"Darling!"

She swayed towards him and John wrapped his arms about her. "What a nut you are," he said.

"It's quite easy," Diana said. "I fell in love with you the minute I saw you at the railroad station. I'm really awfully resourceful."

"I'll say you are."

"How about painting me now, Johnny?"

"How about sticking to the arrangement made when you were Trixie?"

"How about it?"

She snuggled close, and he could feel her soft hair against his cheek. Reaching out, he switched off the small lamp, and there was only the moon to see them. John deliberately dropped his hand to Diana's round knee.

She pressed even closer. "Darling," she whispered. Then she kissed him, and again she pressed covered breasts against him. Her hands clenched behind his neck, and she shuddered as she felt his hands stealing up the white flesh of her soft upper arms. They glided gently to the V of the dress, hesitated a second, then the muttered "Oh!" told without question of doubt their ultimate destination.

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